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The  
Feet of the Young Men

*Some Candid Comments on the Rising Generation,  
with an  
Epilogue 1929*

By  
Janitor

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## INTRODUCTION

FATHER RONALD KNOX, in what may be termed his Rómanesque period, once drove a devout congregation to guilty giggling by giving in his own inimitable way and with much pantomime a new version of an old story. He took his hearers to the breakfast table of Ananias and Sapphira. Sapphira is pouring out the coffee. Ananias is reading the *Financial Times*. Father Knox, in surplice and stole, plays both parts with an address that suggests a missed vocation.

“Thapphira, my dear,” says Ananias in his best Whitechapel, looking up from his paper, “what about a little flutter in Christianity?” Sapphira presumably concurs, with results that are familiar even to those whose scriptural education has been received at one of our greater public schools.

A Biblical story will lose nothing in the telling by Father Knox, but I have always felt that this particular tragedy has modern applications which even he has never fully explored. There are, for example, those young men, whose feet were so conveniently at the door at the moment of crisis. We know nothing about them, save that they were punctual and efficient, yet they were an element as essential to the drama as a Greek chorus, inevitably present to point a moral and to complete, if not to adorn, a tale.

Although it is dangerous to make parables out of history, these young men have another and more general significance. They are the undertaker's universal accomplices. They are always waiting at the door to carry out the corpses of the older generation. We may forget them, we may decide to ignore them, but there they are, and the moment must come when the tramp of their feet will make itself heard.

And we do ignore them. Of our Elder Statesmen we know rather more than anyone can wish. The Press, abetted by the Publishers and the Circulating Libraries, sees to that. We have learnt to recognize the Roman Senator in Lord Oxford, the German philosopher in Lord Haldane, the chameleon in Mr. Lloyd George. We are aware of the pipes and pigs of Mr. Baldwin. We are depressed by Sir Austen Chamberlain, particularly when he tries to be facetious. We are disappointed in Mr. Ramsay MacDonald. We are terribly frightened of Mr. Winston Churchill. We are rather shocked by Lord Birkenhead. We are unspeakably bored by—others of our rulers, actual or potential. One is always forgetting to add that one respects Lord Grey.

Many of these people have been written up in volume form by their friends or their enemies, an honour which an earlier generation was readier to accord to the dead than to the living; others have been kind enough to tell us all about themselves. But in a bibliography of these antedated obituary notices we find very little information about the Young Men; and this, when you come to think of

it, is strange, since in ten or fifteen years' time the Elder Statesmen will have made us their last bow, and these same Young Men will be lording it in their place.

Those, therefore, to whom the future is at least as interesting as the present, and a little more important than the past, may be concerned to adjust the balance; and to turn for a brief hour or two to the hopes and the fears, the doubts and the promises of the years that are coming.

JANITOR.



## OSWALD MOSLEY, M.P.

IN the pageantry of Carlyle's *French Revolution* the figure of Philippe Egalité, Duke of Orleans, passes and repasses before the eye. "Half weary of a world which is more than half weary of him," he is the true type of aristocrat turned revolutionary. We see him, disappointed in his early ambitions, turning against his own caste, sunning himself in the applause of the crowd as he mingles ostentatiously with the Commoners at the procession of the States General, and joining himself with a grand gesture to the gentlemen of the Third Estate. We see him, less composed, at his last levee, insulted and jostled by angry courtiers, one of whom, as Philippe stamps out in a rage, leans over the staircase and spits on his head. Then comes the full tide of that Revolution for which he has waited so impatiently. For a brief space he rides the breakers, his head above water. He calls himself Egalité and votes for the King's death; and on January 21st, 1793, we have a glimpse of him, through a forest of bayonets, sitting in his cabriolet in the Place de la Révolution. Three months later he is himself a prisoner, and in November we have our last sight of him, in his elegant green coat,

white waistcoat and yellow buckskins, accompanied by three protesting gaol-birds to a not ungallant end under the guillotine.

In our own day Count Karolyi has followed the same road to a less heroic destination. For years before the war he was the protagonist in Hungary of a rather watery Liberalism. No one, least of all that great Hungarian, Count Tisza, took him very seriously, but with the collapse of the Austrian Empire in 1918 his chance came. Hailed as the saviour of his country, he was swept into power by a wave of popular enthusiasm. He was to make an honourable peace, to demobilize the army, to avert bankruptcy, to establish free institutions, and Heaven knows what else. And he did—almost nothing. He persuaded his King to abdicate; he was inactive while Count Tisza was murdered; and, with the disappearance of the two men who might have saved Hungary from profound misery, he devoted himself to interminable harangues and noble gestures—the Egalités love their gestures. Finally he allowed the government to pass by imperceptible stages into the hands of Bela Kun and his gang of Bolshevist murderers. Then, more prudent than the earlier Egalité, he slipped over the frontier to safety, leaving his country to a Reign of Terror and every principle he had ever professed in indefinite abeyance. Now he lives in exile, a man without a country, liable to be set upon and beaten if he sets foot even in the streets of Vienna. Yet he has never ceased to wonder why the entire world—with the exception of Mr. Seton Watson, who has blundered

more confidently and consistently in the affairs of Central Europe than any other living man—refuses to regard him as a martyr.

Despite the warnings of history, the rôle of *Egalité*, which, from the days of the Gracchi onwards, has lured so many men to an unpleasant fate, seems to lose none of its attractions for the young politician of ample purse and elastic principles.

To compare Mr. Tom Mosley with Philippe, Duke of Orleans, or even with Count Karolyi, would be slightly ridiculous, as he is unlikely to achieve a fraction of their eminence; but he has cast himself for the same glittering part, even if he lacks the power to play it.

Tom Mosley is the eldest son and heir of Sir Oswald Mosley, a fact of which neither cares particularly to be reminded. The Mosleys are a family of respectable antiquity, for many generations lords of the manor of Manchester, and to-day possessed of considerable landed property and an income by no means contemptible. Young Mosley was educated at Winchester, where his schoolfellows appear to have neglected an obvious duty, and at Sandhurst, where it is said that he was ragged occasionally, but not as frequently as was desirable. During the war, it may be owned, he served creditably in the 16th Lancers and the Air Force, receiving a severe wound which has not been without its political value.

He entered Parliament in 1918 as Coalition Unionist member for Harrow. In the House he discovered, like other young men of promise, that the whole



duty of a private member is to hold his tongue and to vote as his Whip directs. But neither Winchester nor Sandhurst had taught Master Tom to hold his tongue ; and the Whips were to find it no light task to guide him into the right lobby.

Casting a roving eye over the political situation, young Mr. Mosley decided to assert his personality by espousing a cause and adopting a leader. The cause he selected was the League of Nations, and the leader was that lonely and prophetic figure, Lord Cecil. To the League he still pays intermittent lip-service, though the shadow of the Third International has cast a slight chill upon his devotion to an obviously capitalist and Imperialist Body. Lord Cecil, however, has successfully shed his disciple—"the follower," as Lord Birkenhead once gibed. But a League which everyone in theory supports may prove an unsatisfactory mistress to an ambitious young politician, and it was soon abundantly clear that Lord Cecil was not, if he could help it, going to be kind enough to provide a stalking-horse for Tom Mosley. Once again the roving eye flitted round, falling, this time, upon Ireland.

Mr. Mosley, the House was to learn, was a young man with a conscience ; Mr. Mosley could not abide Sir Hamar Greenwood and his Black and Tans ; in short, Mr. Mosley was very much afraid that it might, in the near future, be his painful duty to vote against the Government. So his slight, rather effeminate figure, his long nose and his little black moustache, became familiar to members, and the

low, monotonous voice was found to contain a small armoury of epigram and invective.

At this time he reduced to a fine art the practice of drawing Mr. Winston Churchill into angry debate. Perhaps that sing-song voice carried an echo of twenty years back, when a young member for Oldham was baiting the Prime Minister of the day. It is always disquieting to have your youthful follies recalled to you, and there was something about that supercilious young Mr. Mosley which simply infuriated the usually imperturbable Mr. Churchill. The fun grew faster and more furious when Mr. Mosley, accompanied by Lord Henry Bentinck—who is never really happy for more than six months on the same side of the House—solemnly crossed the floor. After this declaration of independence Mr. Mosley continued to cast the pearl of his patronage before a rather unresponsive League, to pursue with coy embraces the ascetic form of Lord Cecil, and to play the *banderillero* to Mr. Churchill. The Harrow Conservative Association, it is true, began to get a little restive, but in the summer of 1922 a lot of people were out of love with the Coalition.

Then came the famous meeting at the Carlton Club, which granted the Conservative Party a decree *nisi* against Mr. Lloyd George. Lord Henry Bentinck trotted obediently back to the fold, but Mr. Mosley, rather to the embarrassment of his Association, continued to assert his independence of a party which he might have claimed had just taken his advice. The electors of Harrow, a trifle flustered at having to

choose between two gentlemen who both called themselves Conservatives, at length decided in favour of the devil they knew, and Mr. Mosley continued to represent them.

In the new Parliament all was changed. Lord Cecil, careless of the feelings of his "follower," actually took office. The electors of Dundee had unexpectedly preferred a teetotal eccentric to Mr. Churchill. And, worst of all, the General Election had produced other young men of merit besides Mr. Mosley. Ireland was more or less settled; the League was secure in the public estimation. It looked as though the Independent Unionist member for Harrow might find his invective as effectively demobilized as the Black and Tans of unlamented memory.

The answer was a more truculent independence. If the Coalition had been chastised with Whips, the Conservative Government should be flayed with scorpions. The flagellation was the more piquant by reason of Mr. Mosley's domestic circumstances. His wife, Lady Cynthia, was the daughter of the Foreign Secretary; and the House would have been a little less than human if it had not indulged in a faint chuckle when the member for Harrow reserved his sharpest castigations for his father-in-law's administration of Foreign Affairs.

About this time Mr. Mosley began to flirt tentatively with the Liberal Party. In the face of that ancient enemy, a Tory Government, the Liberals were displaying a tardy and transitory disposition to forget their mutual animosities; and it was an open

question whether they or Labour would have the reversion to power. At Harrow Mr. Mosley was actually entertained to dinner by the Gladstone Club, and listened complacently while leading local Liberals discovered signs of grace in him, much as a monkey discovers fleas on the body of a companion.

But the affair was never more than a flirtation. Perhaps Mr. Mosley could not muster up sufficient enthusiasm on the burning question of the control of Mr. Lloyd George's money-bags ; perhaps he felt that the time was not ripe for so momentous a decision. At any rate he remained on the fence, and Harrow Conservatives, who had again begun to feel rather uncomfortable, heaved a sigh of relief.

Nevertheless, at the election of 1923, Mr. Mosley cast off the last vestige of Conservatism ; he was opposed by an official Unionist whom he defeated ; and he went back to Parliament as an unhyphenated Independent.

Egalité's time was now at hand. A Labour Government was actually in office. Labour Ministers presided in Whitehall, signing (without too much scrutiny) such documents as their subordinates thought fit to present to them. It was the hour of Labour. And not of Labour only. In the flush of triumph the leaders of Labour showed a generous and catholic disposition. The substantial figure of Lord Haldane moved contentedly back to the Woolsack ; Lord Chelmsford, in modest haste, was ready to place his vast experience at the disposal of the Government (perhaps, of almost any Government) ; while General

Thomson, Sydney Arnold and Sir Sydney Ollivier all accepted the simultaneous gift of a coronet and an office in the administration.

Such a prospect displayed dazzling possibilities to a clever young Independent. What could the Tories offer him but ten years of restless competition with his peers in ability and perhaps in ambition ; and in the end, possibly an under-secretaryship to keep his mouth shut ? And he could scarcely hope for as much from the Liberals, paralysed by a sordid feud which they had neither the wit to compose nor the shame to conceal. No ! Labour was clearly the party for a young man of brains, Labour, with its big battalions of Trade Union-led voters, Labour with its dearth of first-rate, and even second-rate, men, Labour—with all the glittering prizes of office in its hand.

So, as to one on the road to Damascus, the vision came ; and Mr. Mosley, filled with awe, resolved to take up the inheritance of *Egalité*. For a few weeks he kept silence. In Harrow they do not understand these sudden conversions ; the stupid fellows might have asked why, if Mr. Mosley really felt like that, he had just solicited (and obtained) their votes as an Independent and not as a Labour candidate ; why, before declaring himself, he had waited until the result of the election ensured that Labour and not Liberalism would supplant the Tories in the Government of the country. So at first he waited.

On April 1st—auspicious date—he made his submission and was received into the Labour Party. *Egalité* had found his spiritual home. Rumour was

at once busy with his name and elevated him in advance to high office. And rumour might have proved a true prophet had not an insignificant Communist, assisted by the indiscretions of Sir Patrick Hastings and the incurable evasiveness of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, procured the downfall of the first Labour Government.

The approaching dissolution presented Mr. Mosley with a new problem and a new opportunity. For the worm had at last turned, and the long-suffering electors of Harrow were in revolt. A Conservative Mr. Mosley they had welcomed; an independent Mr. Mosley they had tolerated; a Liberal Mr. Mosley they might just have stomached; but a Socialist Mr. Mosley was altogether too much for their suburban souls. He must go elsewhere.

Of course there was no great difficulty about that. There were, Mr. Mosley claimed, some fifty seats competing for the honour of electing him as their representative. But he scorned an easy triumph. He would win his spurs as a Knight of Labour by some striking feat. There was, for example, Birmingham, the home of the Chamberlain tradition, solidly Unionist since the days of "We are seven." And in Birmingham there was the Ladywood Division, represented by Mr. Neville Chamberlain, whose majority a persevering gentleman named Dr. Dunstan had been steadily reducing. It was whispered that this time the majority would disappear. Here was a chance for a deed of arms spectacular and not too Quixotic. He would beard the lion in his den, as Lord Randolph

Churchill had bearded him some forty years back ; he would attack and defeat a Chamberlain in his own home. Of course there was that tiresome fellow Dr. Dunstan, patiently preparing a fresh onslaught on Ladywood. But Dr. Dunstan must be reasonable ; Dr. Dunstan was a Communist, Dr. Dunstan—and, in the end, Dr. Dunstan vanished, protesting. Yet the plan did not quite come off, and when the votes were counted—and recounted more than once—Mr. Neville Chamberlain remained member for Ladywood by a majority of seventy-seven. Mr. Mosley was justly incensed. A second count had actually given him a majority, and in the heat of the moment he hinted that trickery of some sort must have been employed. “After every election,” he plaintively explained, “I seem to have a legal action with the Tories or something of this kind.” And of course it was always the Tories’ fault.

Mr. Mosley, however, was content with this outburst, and accepted his defeat, the more readily perhaps as Labour was in a hopeless minority in the new Parliament. Released from his political duties, he paid a visit to India, and, like Pagett, M.P., when he had been there a fortnight he knew all about the country. He delivered a number of speeches, to the gratification of the supporters of Swaraj, who had scarcely expected to hear such enlightened sentiments from the son-in-law of the late Lord Curzon, and to the embarrassment of certain of His Majesty’s representatives who had been unwary enough to extend to him the hospitality of Government House.

Returning to England, he made a series of attacks on the Banks, an offensive which was calculated to appeal to the more extreme of his colleagues. Next year he paid a visit to the United States, and in the autumn, on the resignation of the member for Smethwick, procured, in the face of unexpected opposition from headquarters, his adoption as Labour candidate.

The by-election which followed was one of the most unpleasant contests that has taken place since the War. Again, of course, it was all the 'Tories' fault ; the atmosphere of violence and of unrestrained personalities which surrounds Mr. Mosley's political career is always someone else's fault. I am, in fact, reminded of a dog I once possessed, a meek little fox-terrier with one unfortunate characteristic. When I took him for a walk into the neighbouring town, his appearance was the signal for every dog within sight to set upon him. So far as I could see, he did nothing to provoke them ; but I am bound to add that he seemed thoroughly to enjoy the succession of general actions into which our progress invariably developed.

Certainly in Smethwick Mr. Mosley met his opponents a little more than half way. He made much of an alleged remark of Mr. Baldwin's, reported on the sole authority of Mr. Cook, that " all the workers must face a reduction in wages." When Mr. Baldwin denied having ever made such a statement, the matter should have ended. But Mr. Mosley thought otherwise. He continued to make use of the Prime Minister's unspoken threat, and his later explanation, that if Mr. Baldwin had not said it, Sir William



Joynson-Hicks had said something rather like it, was delightfully ingenuous. Egalité must be allowed some licence, and the size of his majority at Smethwick must be his justification for the violence of his rhetoric, his misrepresentation of his opponents, and the efficiency with which freedom of speech was denied to the Conservative candidate and his supporters.

Egalité, now restored to his country's legislature, is scarcely a popular figure. Egalité never is, save for brief intervals and among men who do not know him. That his own class should dislike him is 'only natural, for it is not enough for Egalité to turn his own coat; he must also thoroughly dust the coats of his former friends. If you want to hear the worst about Dives, you ask not Lazarus but Mr. Mosley. Naturally Dives is resentful, especially when he remembers that the Mosleys themselves are probably richer than he is. "Ah!" explains Mr. Mosley, "but I am ready to surrender my wealth—to a Socialist Government—and you are not." "Bunkum!" says Dives rudely. "Get rid of it now, and then you can talk." "But if I did," replies Mr. Mosley, "I could not use it to further those Socialist principles which are so dear to me, and I should merely be handing it back to selfish capitalists like yourself."

The charge has undoubtedly been over-stressed, and perhaps Egalité has the best of the argument. Yet people are slow to understand why it is wrong for Dives to have a luxurious house in Park Lane, but right for Mr. Mosley to have a smaller but exceedingly comfortable and expensive house in Smith Square;

wrong for Dives to disfigure the countryside with his castle, but right for Mr. Mosley to spend large sums of money in buying, restoring and furnishing Durdent Manor ; wrong for Mrs. Dives to go about in pearls which she has not bought at Woolworth's, and furs which no rabbit has provided, but quite all right for Lady Cynthia to do so. When the argument has died down, a feeling remains that it is not quite decent, that Mr. Mosley is trying to get the best of both worlds : the <sup>2</sup>material advantages which great wealth can give, and the complacency of the man to whom wealth is a vain thing ; the social inheritance of the son of Sir Oswald and the son-in-law of Lord Curzon, and the popular standing of one to whom all men are brothers. Of course that is Egalité's old difficulty.

The world will seldom appreciate what it does not understand ; and there is much about Mr. Mosley which it does not understand. There is, for instance, the sense of humour which will invite a party of friends to dinner and set before them a savoury of which the main ingredients are cigar ash and castor oil. There is the good taste which appears in publicly reviling members of your own family. When young Mr. Mosley poured his choicest invective on the administration of his father-in-law, people smiled—perhaps because the father-in-law was Lord Curzon ; and because Lord Curzon, who was one of the most devoted public servants this country has ever had, was a kind of legend for years before his death. When Mr. Mosley and his father enter into public and

personal controversy, we are still amused, but our appreciation is tepid. Of course it was Sir Oswald's fault ; he began it. (That is just what my terrier always tried to tell me.)

The intimate details which emerge from the debate are certainly a boon to those who enjoy anything a little out of the ordinary. Thus Sir Oswald confides in us that his son "was born with a golden spoon in his mouth ;" "was brought up on the fat of the land ;" "has never done a decent day's work in his life ;" and concludes with the interesting information that his son's birth cost him a hundred pounds in doctor's bills, an amount which he now evidently regards as ridiculously excessive. And the son, after vowing never to enter into a controversy with his father, thrills us with the news that at the age of five he was removed from his father's control by judicial decree, and thereafter was not indebted to him for anything except alimony paid under compulsion to his mother. So these edifying amenities go on.

Nor is it only in his domestic relations that Egalité's taste is sometimes a little odd. During the Smethwick election that third-rate dirge, "The Red Flag," yielded in popularity to a new refrain, set to a familiar hymn tune ; and Mr. Mosley, we learn, stood by with head reverently bowed, while his supporters sang :

*"Rescue the perishing,  
Care for the dying.  
Oswald is merciful,  
Mosley will save."*

A sense of humour sometimes preserves a man from this kind of blasphemous rubbish, but Mr. Mosley keeps his for seasoning his savouries.

So Egalité has lost, as Egalité must always lose, most of his old friends. Can he replace them? The leaders of Labour are lukewarm in their welcome. Mr. MacDonald perhaps regards him as an additional embarrassment to an uncomfortably precarious leadership. The others do not quite know what to make of him; he is not their sort; he talks in a strange tongue.

So latterly Mr. Mosley has turned to the extremists. "I have faith in the Clyde," he declared the other day, though we have yet to see if the Clyde has much faith in him. The extremists will use him for just so long as he serves their purpose, but they will never make a friend of him. It is this sense of ostracism that is the secret of Mr. Mosley's truculent demeanour, for when a man of his years becomes embittered he becomes very bitter indeed, and the less sure he feels of himself, the more noisily will he confront the world. Yet truculence, bitterness, sound and fury are likely to avail him little in the course he has set for himself. If he fails in it, his failure will be final; and if he succeeds, the fruits of victory will be snatched from his hands. When the long-expected day of Revolution arrives, he will find, as the Egalités have always found, that his associates have no further use for him; and he will doubtless be surprised, as the Egalités always are surprised, when the class which he has spent his years in reviling declines to take him back.

That is, of course, if he has time to feel surprised at anything. Oswald, in the words of his favourite hymn, may be merciful, but Revolutions are notoriously unkind, especially to their masters, whose hands they have a nasty habit of biting. That is why, should I ever find myself faced with the melancholy spectacle of Mr. Baldwin hanging from a lamp-post in Whitehall, I have a presentiment that if, after a moment's reflection on the mutability of human affairs, I move a little higher up the street, I shall be pleasantly rewarded by finding the next lamp-post adorned by Mr. Tom Mosley.

## *THE YOUNG CONSERVATIVES*

It would be a pleasant, though not very profitable, presumption on our part to attempt to picture the feelings of a British statesman of a century back, permitted, by some fourth-dimensional upheaval, to pay a visit to the House of Commons of 1927. This unfortunate victim of relativity would of course be a contemporary of Canning and Peel, perhaps have learnt his statesmanship at the feet of the great Billy Pitt, even have been lulled into an uneasy slumber by the interminable periods of Edmund Burke. Naturally he must be a Commoner, full of respect for his honourable Estate and for the House which, under Providence, had so ordered the conduct of the late War as to establish the British Constitution unchallengeably first in the estimation of Europe.

Watch him, then, as he revisits his ancient haunts. Note how he pauses as, impressed and even a trifle disconcerted, he surveys the Gothic splendours which in 1833 rose from the ashes of the ancient and familiar building. Doubtless, however, as, confident of his privileges, he passes through Hall and Lobby and beyond the bar on to the floor of the House, the atmosphere will in some measure reassure him ; for,

as we all know, the curious tradition survives in the Office of Works that our legislators do their duty most efficiently with hot heads and cold feet. Yet his composure, scarcely restored by this discovery, and by the sight of the Speaker in wig and robes, would soon be sorely tried once more. I would like to time his visit during what the Press would describe as "a lively passage" in the routine of business; when Lady Astor (strange portent!) was exchanging light badinage with the Labour Benches, or Mr. Kirkwood was politely denouncing some Cabinet Minister as a "murderer," or Mr. Jack Jones, in his genial way, was describing the Conservative Party, individually and collectively, as "dirty dogs," or the member for Dulwich was airing his latest pet name for Miss Ellen Wilkinson.

Yet I doubt whether such amenities would scandalize our statesman more than would the occupants themselves of the benches. In them indeed he might read the history of a hundred years. Where, he might inquire, are the gentlemen of England, the fox-hunting, port-drinking squires, who voted straight and spoke seldom and looked down their noses at the "new men" who were turning the best club in London into a "damned counting-house"?

In their place he would see—the House of Commons of 1927, a little duller and less distinguished in appearance than in reality, for one pair of trousers is very like another. And, after he had identified Mr. Ramsay MacDonald as the probable leader of the Tory Party, and Mr. P. J. Hannon as a disciple of

Daniel O'Connell's, he might be pardoned for missing the significance of a little group of young men sitting below the Gangway on the Government side.

Yet these at least he should have recognized. Ever since there was a Tory Party—and the historians will quarrel about dates—there have been young Tories. Whiggishly they called themselves “Patriots” and chased a peace-loving Premier out of office; or, “Young England,” and followed the standard of Lord John Manners and Benjamin Disraeli; or “The Fourth Party,” and caused exquisite embarrassment to a humdrum leader; or, as at present, they may have left it to others to supply the title and credit the corporate existence.

There is surely no section of the House to-day of whom so little is known and so much is expected. The Young Conservatives—some of them are not so very young and others, it is whispered, are not so very Conservative—are the imponderable quantity in politics. Who are they? What are they up to? What are they going to do about it? Men ask these questions, and in answering them sometimes overestimate the weight of articulate but youthful intelligence, and underestimate that of the silent but maturer powers which so largely control our destinies. Thus critics, who are beginning to complain against the Young Conservatives that so far they have been all promise and very little achievement, exaggerate the position of the private member in any Parliament, and more especially of the private member of the huge Tory majority in the present Parliament. They



are also, perhaps, unaware that the Tory Party, externally so solid, so united and so loyal, is in fact riven by dissensions almost as profound as those which sever them from their political opponents. The Young Conservatives, after all, are but a group, and quite a small group. Arrayed against them in the ranks of their friends, are many with whom they would rather fight than fraternize. There are, for example, the "industrials"—the "Forty Thieves," as their junior colleagues have irreverently dubbed them—the gentlemen who own a dual allegiance: to their constituents and to their business interests (just as the Labour member owes a dual allegiance—to his constituents and to his trade union). The "Forty Thieves" for the most part do not represent what is known as Big Business: they are not Monds so much as demi-Monds; men of money, without which no Party to-day can work; friends of that open-handed organization known euphemistically as "the Trade"; and those others who are the recognized medium whereby financial interests outside the House can bring pressure to bear on the Government.

The "industrials," like many other British institutions, are worse on paper than in fact. Their limitations are very plain. They regard idealism of any kind as probably humbug and as certainly dangerous. Their attitude towards the Young Conservatives is indicated by the nickname—the Y.M.C.A.—originally, I believe, bestowed by O'Connor (in the unregenerate days before he joined them), and later adopted with enthusiasm as the retort discourteous to "Forty

Thieves"; also by the apprehension tempered by scorn with which they received a little book—*Industry and the State*—recently written by four of the Young Conservatives\* and expressing the faith that is in the left wing of the Tory Party. The industrials apply, not always intelligently, the template of business interests to each new proposal; and they are mortally afraid of anything remotely resembling Socialism. They have a "pull" in the Party councils which most Conservatives of the rank and file deplore and are apparently impotent to check.

Naturally antipathetic to the "industrials," but frequently found in alliance with them, are the Old Tories, the Diehards proper, descendants of the men who fought the Repeal of the Corn Laws to the last division. With them must be numbered the retired Generals and Admirals, who mostly represent semi-fashionable seaside resorts. These—the men of acres and the men of war—are the real Conservatives, mute, inglorious Banburys who dislike any sort of change as a matter of principle, and believe, at the bottom of their hearts, that force is the right remedy for most of our troubles. Left to themselves they give very little trouble to their Whips. They are loyal by instinct, they practice discipline as well as preach it, they are very nearly inarticulate, and they would almost as soon be seen voting in the wrong lobby as dining in a tail coat and a black tie.

But their native simplicity is sometimes their undoing. They are too amenable. They will move to

\* Boothby, Loder, Macmillan, Oliver Stanley.

the right in column of fours without scrutinizing sufficiently closely the word of command or the purpose of the commander. It is never very difficult to make their flesh creep and their hair stand on end ; and to-day it is only necessary to produce a bearded effigy with a red flag in one hand and a bag of roubles in the other to send them scuttling into comradeship with their old and natural opponents, the " industrials."

For obvious reasons both these sections mistrust the Young Conservatives, whom they suspect of wishing to smuggle in Socialism through the back door ; and in their united endeavours to keep the young men in their place they are undoubtedly aided by the circumstances of the day. " Fourth Parties " traditionally flourish more when the parent party is in opposition than when it is in power. In the view of the Whips, Ministerial back-benchers should be seen and not heard, and the young member especially is to be discouraged from undue garrulity. If he agrees with his leaders, speech is superfluous ; if he disagrees, it is dangerous ; and anyhow, he is holding up the business of the House.

Yet another consideration imposes restraint upon the Young Conservatives. They are—almost to a man—for Mr. Baldwin. His speeches, particularly on industrial problems, represent their own views ; and there is no man in the Cabinet whom they would as cheerfully and as loyally follow. But it is an open secret that the " industrials " have no love for Mr. Baldwin. Once, it is true, he was an electoral convenience. It has happened before in the history of

the Tory Party that the man who is able to win an election is not thought good enough to exploit the victory. In the hour of battle Mr. Baldwin was an ideal leader. His reputation for honesty and for not being "too clever," his enlightened sentiments, his pleasant and at times inspiring oratory, his ability to mobilize hesitant Liberals and the apathetic of no particular party, all indicated him as the man for 1924. But the man for 1924 is not, in the opinion of many of his followers, the man for 1928. What is the good, these covert rebels inquire, of talking about "peace in our time," when there is a chance of dealing Trade Unionism a deadly blow? And where is the sense, when you have just won an election against Socialism, of promptly endowing widows with pensions and the country with an Electricity Bill? So they mutter and grumble—and intrigue; and behind the scenes hovers the capacious figure of Lord Younger, the most astute party manager the Conservatives have ever had. When the pundit whispers, "Baldwin must go," the message passes down the ranks of the "industrials" like wind across a field of standing wheat, and even the country gentlemen are uneasily conscious of a draught.

So the plot goes on. It would move more rapidly were the supply of Perkin Warbecks more plentiful. For who is to sit in Mr. Baldwin's place? There was a time when Sir William Joynson-Hicks seemed to be the man. Undoubtedly his selection would have gratified the Fascists, the extreme Protestants, and the old ladies in the provinces who read the *Daily*

*Mail.* Yet was he quite the man ? A very good fellow, of course : strong, sensible, a Churchman ; no cleverness, mark you, but just a plain Briton ; and yet the idol of Bath and Bournemouth is not necessarily the idol of Liverpool and Birmingham. All right sixty or seventy years ago, before Gladstone—or was it Disraeli ?—started scattering votes to working-men. But to-day ? Perhaps not. So the pundit is again consulted, and after a period of profound reflection is heard to enunciate, a trifle indistinctly, the name of Sir Douglas Hogg.

The Young Conservatives are aware of all this. But what can they do ? If they criticize the Government they can scarcely fail to embarrass the Prime Minister ; if they fail to criticize, they may be condoning acts for which Mr. Baldwin is only nominally responsible, and of which they themselves heartily disapprove. This dilemma can probably only be broken by Mr. Baldwin. There have been moments, as in the General Strike, when he seemed to be the leader for whom the nation is waiting. But there have been other moments, less happy, when we have been driven to ask whether, after all, he is not a man of atmosphere rather than of action. Vulgarly speaking, will he have the “ guts ” to hang on to the rope when the tug begins ? Or, disappointed by a failure to respond to his policy of conciliation and disgusted by the discovery of intrigues against him in the ranks of his friends, will he abandon the struggle and his leadership ? That indeed would be a calamity, equal perhaps to that of 1906, which

would turn the Tory Party into the wilderness to hunt for its lost soul.

At the beginning of 1927, when the Bill to regulate the powers of Trades Unions was announced, it almost seemed that the clash was coming. After the experience of the General Strike some measure of the kind was unavoidable, but the Bill was hailed at once as a triumph for the Forty Thieves and a rebuff for Mr. Baldwin and the party of conciliation. In the event, however, the issue was not so clean cut. Not all the "industrials" were pleased; and the Y.M.C.A., though critical, was by no means hostile, and made many of the most constructive suggestions in committee. Labour opposition, proclaimed with dark threats, resolved itself into "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing"; and the controversy, become distinctly tepid, trickled languidly on over the settlement of technicalities and the correction of faulty draughtsmanship on points of detail.

Yet in the ranks of the Conservatives there is to-day a feeling of disappointment, of something more than the malaise to be expected in a Parliament's declining months.

Rumour has it that the Young Conservatives no longer dine together so regularly and convivially as of old. Although ready enough to curb the excessive powers of Trades Unions, they are asking themselves what Mr. Baldwin has done with that industrial policy of his. Mere repression is not enough. The Trades Union Bill was tolerable, even necessary if

regarded simply as a clearance of the site. But the site, once clear, should be filled, and it is becoming ominously evident that the contractor, having completed the demolition, is packing up his tools and going home.

The Forty Thieves, on the other hand, although there is nothing to shock their sensibilities in the spectacle of an empty site, have other matters to worry them. They find this Baldwin really very troublesome. No sooner has he, under some pressure, put the Unions in their places, then he must begin offering votes to young women of twenty-one. Then there is the House of Lords. The prudent industrialist believes in insurance, and the restoration of the veto to the Upper Chamber (albeit reformed) seemed a fair and reasonable premium to pay against the risk of a Labour Government. But just as the Cabinet was on the point of taking out a policy it changed its mind. Why? they ask; and if they are in any difficulty about finding an answer, Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Rothermere will give them every assistance.

But if Mr. Baldwin stands his ground the Young Conservatives will be behind him, and their support would be by no means negligible. They are a likely lot of young men, with certain advantages and qualities in common. They are hard workers; most of them fought in the war; many of them have travelled widely; and nearly all of them can speak from first-hand experience on their own subjects.

Possibly the most prominent in the public view is Duff Cooper, who early in the present Parliament made

the beginnings of a big reputation with a speech on the Egyptian question. His trouble, all through his life, has been the reluctance of other people to take him seriously. There is something about that fair, rather delicate, slightly languid exterior that suggests the dilettante. The suggestion, though unjust, accounts for the fact that people are always being surprised by Duff Cooper. At Oxford he surprised his tutor by the Class he took in Modern History ; he surprised the authorities of his College, less pleasantly, by an unexpected talent for leading a first-class riot ; he surprised a critical audience at the Union by the excellence of his speeches.

After an interlude at the Foreign Office he took a commission in the Grenadier Guards. His senior officers were soon wringing their hands and shedding bitter tears over him. Never, they protested, had they seen a less promising officer ! Neither his appearance, which no uniform could properly militarize, nor his conduct, which was apparently impervious to the famous discipline of the Guards, nor his military proficiency, which was remarkable for its lapses, held out the faintest hope that he would ever be a credit to the Brigade of Guards or to his despairing instructors in the art of war. Yet, to the bewilderment of his senior officers, he passed *facile princeps* in every kind of examination or test which they inflicted upon him. At last, in despair, they sent him out to France. There, they must have thought, he would find his level : a clever fellow, no doubt, but not, in the name of the late Duke of



Cambridge, a soldier. And in France, Duff Cooper again confounded the critics ; for he did exceedingly well, returning to civilian life in 1919 with a D.S.O., a mention in dispatches and a first-rate reputation.

After the War he surprised the world by marrying Lady Diana Manners, by common consent the most famous young lady in these islands. "Ah!" murmured those who knew him a little, "henceforth he will appear as the husband of Lady Diana." In that style, it is true, he went up to Oldham in 1924, but he certainly won and holds the seat on his own merits, as Duff Cooper.

It would be rash to prophesy anything for the future of such a specialist in the unexpected. In the House he has scarcely followed up his early triumph, although both there and in the country he speaks occasionally and well, if sometimes at too great length, on Foreign Affairs and the League of Nations. He plays rather a lone hand ; he is a young Conservative, without being exactly a Young Conservative. Although he represents a most democratic constituency, he is scarcely a democratic figure. He would, one feels, have been more at home in the days of our friend of 1827 ; but that he will spring yet another surprise upon the world by completely adapting himself to the atmosphere of modern politics is a conclusion by no means improbable.

On the whole, however, if I had to "spot" the future leader of the Tory Party from the ranks of the Young Conservatives, my choice would fall not on Duff Cooper but on Harold Macmillan. Up to a

point there is a curious resemblance between them. They shared an early taste for the picturesque : while Duff Cooper was a cynical and disillusioned Tory, Harold Macmillan affected an eyeglass with a broad black band and a fairly æsthetic brand of Liberalism. Both joined the Brigade of Guards ; both distinguished themselves rather unexpectedly in an uncongenial profession ; and both have married Wives.

Yet here their careers diverge. Duff Cooper has still to show that he is more than a clever undergraduate ; but Harold Macmillan has already given proof of his qualities. In 1924 he attacked and captured a difficult constituency, Stockton, by methods which, for a Tory, were original. He had previously reorganized his Local Association on a democratic basis, and made his supporters contribute to the cost of the election ; he carried on his campaign without the assistance (or handicap) of speakers from the Central Office, and its literature, which poured in by the ton, was left safely reposing in unopened parcels ; in fact, he worked and won almost single-handed.

In the House his reputation rests, not on a single effort, but on a sequence of thoughtful speeches, out of which emerges the germ of a constructive industrial policy. He knows his subjects. As a director of the famous publishing firm with which his family is associated, he is necessarily in contact with many of the business and industrial problems of the day ; and, having been A.D.C. to the Duke of Devonshire during his Canadian Governorship, he has some personal knowledge of the Empire.

So sound a reputation has he made for himself in so brief a space, that to-day, when under-secretaryships fall vacant, people are beginning to mention his name as a candidate for office.

A Young Conservative of rather a different type is Lord Apsley, the eldest son of Lord Bathurst. In appearance he is exactly what anyone who had not been at Eton and Christ Church would regard as a typical product of both foundations; and his War service with a Yeomanry Regiment seems exactly appropriate. Yet he, too, has his unexpected patches. In 1925, when he was already a member for Southampton, he booked a steerage passage to Australia, just as though he were an ordinary emigrant. There he and his wife, as plain Mr. and Mrs. George Bott, spent some months of exceedingly hard work, first on a farm in Gippsland (wages £1 a week and keep), and later in a group of new settlers. After a trip with Mr. Michael Terry through the wilder parts of Northern Australia, he returned home, having obtained a thorough personal experience of overseas settlement.

This zest for personal research, which is typical of the Young Conservatives, is also displayed in the career of Bob Boothby. This swarthy, smiling, rather dishevelled young man of twenty-seven bubbles with energy and an enthusiasm which lead him sometimes into odd places and strange company. After a useful apprenticeship as private secretary to Mr. Baldwin, he entered Parliament in 1924 as member for East Aberdeenshire, and into the

two years or so of his active political career he has crowded almost a lifetime of journeys and adventures. He went to the West Indies with Mr. Thomas's Committee, and to Ottawa and Washington with the delegation from the Inter-Parliamentary Union. He visited Russia as one of the four Conservative members whose subsequent Report was so hotly criticized. He has been nearly drowned in the Lido, which perhaps served him right for going there, and has spent one unforgettable night with the Peterhead fishing fleet, providing a number of his constituents, during the small hours of the morning, with the unusual spectacle of their member of Parliament in the devastating throes of sea-sickness.

Possibly he has the defects of his admirable qualities. You cannot overflow with energy without someone saying that you are pushful, or with self-confidence without someone else remarking that you are bumptious, or with enthusiasm without some cynical brute declaring that you are half-baked. But if you are young and have a keen sense of humour you can laugh at such discouragement. If Duff Cooper is to be the Balfour of the future, and Harold Macmillan the Baldwin, Bob Boothby may even be the Winston Churchill of 1937. At least he has made a start by becoming Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, a position which should afford him ample facilities for studying his model.

In selecting for these brief, biographical comments a few of the more prominent of the Young Conservatives, certain omissions are unavoidable. What, for

instance, of Lord Hartington, whose very distinct personality is sometimes obscured by the family tradition? Or of O'Connor, the young member for Luton, whose bouncing exterior covers a surprising capacity for hard work and hard thinking? During the debates on the Trades Union Bill, O'Connor played a vigorous and notable part. His contributions were sensible and constructive, and he secured the passage of one amendment of the first importance. What of Euan Wallace, another peripatetic young man, who is now Parliamentary Private Secretary to Mr. Amery? Or of Captain Oliver Stanley, and half a dozen others of whom it is safe to foretell that much more will be heard in the future. The list might be considerably enlarged, but probably, from the examples given, some impression can be gained of those who, in the years to come, are the most likely rulers of the country; of the kind of men they are, and of the kind of ideas which they pursue.

## *PHILIP GUEDALLA*

It is a terrible thing to be a young man of promise, yet it is the kind of calamity which, under certain circumstances, may happen to almost anybody. Someone—probably some elderly don who should know better—first sets the whisper going round, and the mischief is done. However much that young man may subsequently achieve, he will never quite live up to those early expectations. “Oh, yes, he’s not done so badly,” the world will observe, “but up at Oxford (or Cambridge) they used to say he would be——” and so on. That is a fearful handicap to carry through life; and many a young man has broken down under the strain of an unsolicited and overloaded reputation. I doubt, however, whether Philip Guedalla even realizes that it is a handicap. Perhaps he has carried it so long that he has grown accustomed to it. Certainly, in his case, the reputation was there before any don had a chance of bestowing it on him. Rugby had anticipated Balliol, and he arrived in the nest, as it were, fully fledged. From the beginning of his University days he was a personage. His figure as he walked, brooding and abstracted, down the Broad or Holywell, soon became one of the most

familiar in the Oxford of his time. There was—as there is still—something striking in that pallid, impassive face, a suggestion of an Orientalized Napoleon, or an intelligent anticipation of Mussolini.

At Oxford we ask primarily to be entertained. And Guedalla entertained us royally, both in public and private. We would listen fascinated while epigram after epigram dropped from those drawling lips; and if sometimes there was a faint whiff of midnight oil clinging to them, none was so ungrateful as to complain. He could fill the Union as no other speaker could, and some of his *mots* must remain in the memories of his hearers, so that even to-day they can recall them with a pleasant thrill.

But he was no mere Union “hack.” His versatility was amazing. When the O.U.D.S. produced *Julius Cæsar* he took the part—of all parts—of Mark Antony, and really took it very well. (In the first speech he made at the Union after the performance he began: “I come to bury the honourable gentleman from New College, not to praise him.” And he did bury him.)

He produced two lively little volumes of light verse. I have copies of them which I propose to keep, not merely for the excellence of the parodies, but also because I shrewdly suspect that one day they will be exceedingly valuable.

In Schools he gratified his tutors by the excellent classes he took, and though, so far as I know, he never distinguished himself in any form of athletics, Balliol, that sternest of critics, was satisfied.

Outside his own college, he did not perhaps enjoy

the same measure of popular approval. He could never suffer fools gladly—almost a characteristic of Balliol men—but the fools were generally too wise to show any open resentment. For Guedalla had a tongue to be feared. In him Oxford recognized the greatest living exponent of the Balliol manner, which, as he himself put it, “exists chiefly in the imaginations of men of other colleges.”

Finally he became a pundit of military strategy. In those days the substantial shadow of Hilaire Belloc loomed large over Oxford. There, indeed, was a wit and a versatility and a certain agreeable cynicism, which a young man might well imitate, or even improve upon. And as the master, on the strength of a brief period of service as a private in the French artillery, had appointed himself an authority on matters military, the pupil might well do likewise. Moreover, the Honours School of Modern History included Military History and Strategy among its Special Subjects, so that, if you liked, two birds might be killed with one stone.

At any rate, in the later stages of his Oxford career, Mr. Guedalla told us a great deal about the War that was coming, about the excellence of the French Army (and especially its artillery) and about the perfect adequacy of our Expeditionary Force. There were of course those who disagreed with him, but these he would annihilate out of an encyclopædic knowledge of the minor strategic movements of the Franco-Prussian war, or by the rapid recitation of the frontier villages of Belgium, France and Germany. And there



was Lord Roberts. But Lord Roberts was an old man, which was against him, and a general, which was still more against him, and a British general, which was completely damning. For most old men, nearly all old generals, and absolutely all old British generals are stupid.

So we listened and were mightily impressed. Mr. Guedalla was still in the Belloc phase when he went down in 1913, trailing clouds of prospective glory behind him. The young man of promise was off to conquer the world; the career was about to begin. The Bar, and a little literature; the House of Commons, and a little more literature; and finally the Cabinet. That, I think, was the programme, and its miscarriage was due to no fault of his. It was the War which upset (or at any rate postdated) all his calculations.

In the early days of August, 1914, we remembered his prophetic words. He had said there would be a war, and here it was. He had declared that the Germans would march through Belgium, and that was just what they were doing. We recalled his conclusions with relief. We even ventured, assuming the prophet's mantle, to tell our friends what would happen next. The French army, we had been assured, was vastly superior to the German; its men had a fiercer spirit and a finer training, and, above all, its artillery was immeasurably better. All that was required from us was the command of the seas and the dispatch of our small Expeditionary Force. Our Allies would do the rest, and the War would be over by

Christmas. So we said and believed, on the authority of P.G., preaching the gospel more or less according to Hilaire Belloc.

But alas and alas! these pleasant things did not happen. The Germans marched through Belgium, and we said, "Wait and See!" They reached the Aisne, and again we said, "Wait and see." They threatened Paris, and for a moment our faith trembled. Then came the battle of the Marne, and we began to say, "We told you so!" But in the hour of vindication an astonishing stalemate supervened. Mr. Guedalla had told us nothing about trench warfare. By rights the Allies, once launched, should have gone on and on till they had crossed the Rhine and taken the road to Berlin. As it was, they subsided into the waterlogged trenches of Flanders and Champagne.

It was all very disappointing and incomprehensible. Mr. Belloc, I believe, explained it all afterwards to his own satisfaction; but Mr. Guedalla did not even try. I cannot help thinking that he dismissed this most unsatisfactory war and its problems as unworthy of the attention of a serious student of military history. Things should have happened differently, but someone—probably an English general—had been stupid. (Always you come back to that—the incalculable stupidity of the human element. Theoretically you are perfectly right, but in the end some silly ass comes along and breaks the march of events.)

For Mr. Guedalla, therefore, the times were out of joint. In ancient days they dealt drastically with

a discredited prophet; modern England, more tolerant or more cruel, merely ignored him. But there was worse than that to come. Mr. Guedalla was in a world which had grown a little impatient of epigram, and asked for plainer fare; and plain fare was just what he could not provide.

So, like others in a similar plight, he lay low until the times should alter.

This period of enforced hibernation ended with the Armistice. After the passing of those first weeks of exhilaration, the nation fell into another mood. Disillusioned of a new heaven and a new earth, they turned from those who had foretold them, and, after a good deal of vicarious mental stock-taking, were ready for a new reading of history.

This reaction was Mr. Lytton Strachey's opportunity; and Mr. Guedalla, with scarcely a backward glance at his old Bellocian flame, attached himself, with or without permission, to the rising star. Together, Mr. Strachey and Mr. Guedalla have founded the New School of Modern History.

At the outset, the work did not amount to much more than Putting People in their Place. The Victorians, as we all know, were incorrigible hero-worshippers, and in the stress of war we had shown an alarming disposition to follow their foolish example. The wish, perhaps, was father to the thought. Hero-worship demands a hero, or, if none is forthcoming, at least an efficient substitute; and during the war the substitutes had been painfully evident and not always efficient. Anyhow, for heroes or substitutes

the new School had no manner of use. Both must be dealt with faithfully and consigned to the Limbo from which they should never have been allowed to emerge. First, there were certain Victorians whose exposure had been long overdue. Mr. Strachey saw to that, and his two books ran into several editions.\* Mr. Guedalla's first incursion was milder and more detached.† The gods of the Second Empire had long ago been cast from their altars; still there was no harm in giving them a "state funeral." That was what Mr. Guedalla gave them.

Though many will dispute the opinion, I hold that *The Second Empire* is, up till now, his best piece of work. Undoubtedly the period was congenial; there is something attractive about societies in which the appearance of culture is combined with a reality of rottenness. The subject, too, suited his purpose. It had been written about just enough to provide plenty of material, but it had not been properly summed up. That Mr. Guedalla should sum it up as pithily and as wittily—if not always as profoundly—as any living man might have been expected; but his handling of his material was too masterly to be taken as a matter of course.

*The Second Empire* has made much of his subsequent work look like pot-boiling. There was, it is true, a second ambitious volume dealing with the history of the eighteenth century,‡ but here the reader gets

\* *Eminent Victorians* and *The Life of Queen Victoria*.

† *The Second Empire*.

‡ *The Partition of Europe: 1715-1815*.

the impression of being led into a strange country in which the author himself scarcely feels at home. In short, the atmosphere is unfriendly. Next we have three little books of essays, in the course of which a few pinnacles are deprived of their ornaments, a few causes are summarily placed, a few reputations are displaced. They are all good reading and good fun, even if they are not to be taken too seriously. The young man in search of conversational equipment could not visit a better stocked armoury ; although a second-hand epigram is sometimes a dangerous weapon to him who wields it.

His next important book, *Independence Day*, is the finest example we have of Mr. Guedalla's style of the new dispensation. It gives just as much of the facts as are good for us to learn, and a little more of the atmosphere than we have any right to expect. When I add that it does for Lord Chatham and George Washington very much what *Eminent Victorians* did for General Gordon and Florence Nightingale, the book's significance will be appreciated. For, in a word, it contains all the philosophy of the New School of History.

Naturally, the School must have a philosophy of its own ; and when we come to examine it, we find it is a very simple creed. There are no great men in history. There are stupid men, and men who are not quite so stupid. So the great events happen, not through anyone's genius or virtue, but because at critical moments men of pre-eminent folly have occupied the high positions. You win a victory

because your opponent cannot help losing a battle. You conquer an empire because the other man's blunders happen to be a trifle worse than yours. Your rebellion succeeds through the almost unaided efforts of those who are doing their best to suppress it. Then you become a great man, a fetich, the father of your country.

In a pungent passage Mr. Guedalla even suggests that the nations should overhaul their monuments. It is an admirable proposal. Let the statue of Villeneuve depose that of Nelson in Trafalgar Square. Let Benedek and Bazaine displace those grim rows of Prussian Kings in the Sieges-Allee, and let Bismarck, the true parent of the Third Republic, be given a corner somewhere near the Arc de Triomphe. In London we have already canonized Washington in bronze. Let America pay her debt to historic truth; let Lord North preside in marble over the Boston tea-parties, and George III. prance upon the plinth of the Statue of Liberty.

These suggestions may sound a little fantastic, but really they represent without undue exaggeration the *reductio ad absurdum* of the Strachey-Guedalla philosophy.

The same theme is developed in *Palmerston*, Mr. Guedalla's ambitious biography which appeared last year. And what a book! It is brilliant, of course—almost too brilliant. After a chapter or two the brain reels. Were it not for the evidence (and knowledge) of profound research the reader would begin to suspect that, just as Disraeli used his Life

of Lord George Bentinck as a peg for his own political theories, Mr. Guedalla was draping the lay figure of "Pam" with epigram and paradox, so graceful and yet so distracting that the statesman behind them is obscured and almost forgotten. Lord Palmerston has always been rather a man of mystery, and, when Mr. Guedalla has finished with him, the mystery remains.

Indeed, an even worse suspicion begins like a canker to gnaw at the reader. Has Mr. Guedalla even tried to write a life of Lord Palmerston? As the leisurely procession of the nineteenth century passes before us, we begin to wonder whether these are real men and women that we see; whether that enthroned central figure is Lord Palmerston—or Mr. Guedalla, watching his mannequins display the varied charms of his wardrobe. The suggestion may be ungenerous, but it leaps to the mind.

I am told that the next big book is to deal with the Duke of Wellington, and I can well believe the report. There is a type of Englishman whom Mr. Guedalla cannot resist appropriating for his purposes. Palmerston, Gentlemen Johnny Burgoyne, Wellington—there is a John Bullishness about each of them in which, I think, the temptation lies. Mr. Guedalla does not understand John Bull (any more than John Bull can understand Mr. Guedalla); but he cannot leave him alone. As puppets such men are magnificent. The drama unfolds itself in all the pageantry which Mr. Guedalla's pen can conjure up, with those vivid flashes of descriptive writing, those mordant

aphorisms, that wide allusiveness which is a compliment, often undeserved, to the reader's knowledge of history. And when the central figure, the epic hero, arrives, Mr. Guedalla steps forward with a faint sneer and tears away his gorgeous apparel, to show him to us for the poor thing that he was. We, meanwhile, miserable wretches, can only wonder at our blindness. Once again we had been so dazzled by Louis the King that we had forgotten Louis the man; and Mr. Guedalla, in whom is no hero-worshipping nonsense, has been kind enough to put us right.

It is magnificent—but is it history? I doubt whether Mr. Guedalla really cares, and I am quite sure that I do not. It is ungrateful to cavil. At least we are entertained, and, when all has been said, Mr. Guedalla, to apply his own epitaph on Edmund Burke, “is a style.”

But can he keep it up? He has an obvious duty to perform. He has spoilt our appetite for the heavy fare of the orthodox historians, the roast joints and steam puddings of Sir Archibald Alison and his kind. We can no longer digest them; and if we are to read history at all, it has got to be the tempting fare served up once or twice a year by Mr. Strachey and Mr. Guedalla.

Their task will not be easy. Paradoxes are like wild oats; we expect them from young men, and especially from young men of promise, but in middle age they cease to be quite respectable. From youth we expect a less sedate literature than we tolerate from advancing years, and what we call high spirits



in the one we are inclined to label as something like indecency in the other.

But when Mr. Guedalla has finished sowing his wild oats, what sort of crop is he to be allowed ? And has he one that will be worth the harvesting ? However, these are his problems. Whether he will mellow imperceptibly into a serious historian without boring us, or retain his juvenile sprightliness without offending our sense of propriety, is a matter of policy which only he can decide.

Yet there are other possibilities. There is political life. Just as once he abandoned the Bar for literature, he may abandon literature for the House of Commons. At Oxford that seemed to be his true vocation. He led his party at the Union, he appeared on platforms, he declaimed to the freshmen of the Russell and Palmerston Club. But he was, and still is, a Liberal, member of that party which to-day, like the famous Grand Army of Haiti, suffers from a surplus of Generals and a deficiency of rank and file. They have brains without substance ; and even if they contrive to compose their leaders' differences it is at least doubtful whether they can impress themselves on an electorate which yearly thinks more and more in terms of Conservatism and Socialism. It would, perhaps, be offensive to suggest that in adhering to the Liberal Party Mr. Guedalla is backing the wrong horse. Indeed, he might justly retort by asking us which horse we would have him back ; that the Labour Party is extreme, and he is not an extremist ; that the Tory Party is stupid, and he is not stupid. So

he remains a Liberal ; and not even the example of Disraeli can tempt him from his political faith.

In that faith he has fought three elections. It is true that, as a candidate, Abingdon Street finds him a little difficult to place. He is not every constituency's man. At first, wisely, he was given a London division to contest ; but latterly he has been banished to the desert places of Derbyshire, where he may cast epigram and paradox before the intelligence of a semi-rural electorate until the cows come home. In the end he will remain merely "the prospective candidate." Doubtless this error in party management will in time be set right, and, if ever the Liberals become a political force again, we may expect to see him in the House. Whether his rhetorical gifts will find as responsive an audience in that jaded assembly as once they found in the Oxford Union is another matter.

But until the Pentecostal day arrives, let him stick to that studio, where, in a commendable isolation three miles removed from his home, he lives with Lord Palmerston and the erstwhile gods of the nineteenth century ; and let him give us books—and more books !

## *THE MONSTROUS REGIMENT*

I HEAR that not very long ago a lady, well known and highly respected for her public work in this country, sought and obtained an interview with that odd and atavistic person, Benito Mussolini. She went to her appointment hoping to hear from him something of his views on the women of Italy, perhaps to tell him something about the women of Britain. But she found the Duce in no mood for polite phrase-making. He showed only the most perfunctory interest in the women of Britain, though on women in general and on Italian women in particular he expressed himself at some length. Women? They were useless creatures. During the war they had been a danger to the efficiency of the troops. In peace, he supposed, they were necessary to the well-being of men, but should be kept in their proper place; nor did he propose to conceal the fact that a woman's proper place was under lock and key.

That, of course, was Mussolini at his most extravagant; the Mussolini who forgets that the Roman Empire fell with Romulus Augustulus; the same Mussolini who recently told a reporter that he always used a safety razor, but had to have a new blade every day.

Yet it was not all rhodomontade. Most of us take it so much for granted that Fascism is the retort Italian to Bolshevism that we scarcely stop to speculate on the chances of its being something quite different. Can it be that in the mind of the founder of Fascism Civilization—meaning by the term a Peaceful Life for the Ordinary Man—is menaced not so much by Communism, as by a more insidious thing—Feminism ?

If there is any truth in the suggestion we in this country are in a lamentable case. The enemy has her feet firmly planted in our strongholds. She has conquered the professions, she has overrun industry, she has invaded politics. On the workings of feminism in the first two spheres I have nothing at the moment to say ; on the political feminine much.

I am, I frankly admit, prejudiced. During the Suffrage campaign before the War I was once present at a meeting in favour of the Movement. It was attended exclusively by men. They were, as specimens, æsthetically distasteful. Too many of them had foreshortened chins, receding foreheads, passionate, protuberant, be-spectacled eyes, and the kind of complexion which suggests that the hand, if shaken, will leave a dampness behind it. We were addressed by a distinguished literary man of the day who throbbed with emotion for the space of a whole hour. "If we cannot break your hearts," he perorated at last in a shaking voice, "we will break your windows ;" and the young men with foreshortened chins burst into hysterical applause.

It would be absurd to denounce feminism on account of one unfortunate experience ; absurd to utter any sort of wholesale condemnation in these latter days. It is wise to accept the predestined with as good a grace as we can muster, and the triumph of feminism has been inevitable from the moment in the early 'nineties when the first woman mounted her first bicycle. To-day it is here, and has come to stay. But we may still criticize.

No one in his senses will deny that much of the work of women in public life is excellent, though it is doubtful whether the better part of it is not done in local government and in social service, rather than in the Imperial Parliament. Such, however, is the power of prestige that Westminster monopolizes the lime-light at the expense of humbler and drabber bodies like County Councils and Boards of Guardians. Yet we might find it hard to discover the precise contribution of our women legislators to the national welfare since that happy day, commemorated by a much-rejected painting, when Lord Balfour and Mr. Lloyd George introduced Lady Astor to the Speaker.

If the mere absence of positive benefit were all that could be quoted in criticism of the incursion of women into Parliament, the case against them might be dismissed forthwith as "not proven." Politics, after all, is an eternal round of high hopes and bitter disappointments. After every General Election we hear the faint, far trumpets of the Millennium ; and at every Dissolution we find ourselves in the depressing atmosphere of a Post Mortem. It would be unfair to

condemn women because they have not succeeded where men have failed.

That, however, is not the substance of the charge against feminism in Parliament. To my mind, it has been followed by two unfortunate results. In the first place, we see the gross advantage which some of our political women are taking, without stint and without scruple, of their position. In the second place, mainly as the result of the appearance of women in the House of Commons, we have been attacked by an epidemic of silliness scarcely favourable either to the dignity or the amenities of public life. (Here you may interpose that if women like to make fools of themselves, it is not for men to object; but unfortunately a woman has never been able to make a fool of herself without simultaneously making a fool of some man.)

All this is perhaps not very explicit, but an illustration of my meaning readily occurs.

During the first Parliament after the War, Lord Banbury was on his feet addressing the House. Now Lord Banbury in his Commons days was rather more than a man and only a little less than an Estate of the Realm. With the passing of the Parliament Act he took upon himself the functions of a Second Chamber; with this difference, that whereas a Second Chamber is principally concerned with the amendment of measures sent up to it, Sir Frederick Banbury was content with nothing less than their complete destruction. This he compassed by the simple expedient of talking them out. The Government of the day,

of course, could always protect its own measures against him by a drastic use of the guillotine, that time-honoured extinguisher of the reactionary. But the private member had no such defence; and the pages of Hansard between 1906 and 1922 are filled with Sir Frederick's funeral orations over the corpses of his victims. On this particular occasion he was, in accordance with his usual custom and by the employment of his usual tactics, destroying some miserable private Member's bill. Unfortunately, it happened to be a measure in which Lady Astor took a particular interest. The precious minutes slipped by. Sir Frederick, with one eye for the clock, spoke on and on. Vain were the flashing, provocative glances; vain the spirited interjections; vain the shaking of a tiny clenched fist. Sir Frederick was not to be turned from his duty. At length, unable any longer to contain herself, the noble lady slipped from her seat, ran up to the orator, and tugged half-playfully, half-seriously at his coat tails. Sir Frederick—let us note it to his credit—although a trifle discomposed, was proof against the assault and continued his speech until he had talked the bill out.

That is a good illustration of feminism abusing its position and trying "to have it both ways." Suppose that Sir Frederick had played up to Lady Astor, had burst into tears and protested that he "felt faint," would handkerchiefs and smelling salts and sympathy have been forthcoming? I rather think not. Or again, had it been not Lady Astor but a mere man who tweaked Sir Frederick's coat tails, what would

Sir Frederick have done ? Probably, like Mr. Amery on another historic occasion in the House, he would, in vulgar parlance, have "sloshed" his assailant in the jaw. But Lady Astor's jaw may not be "sloshed." She is in the House of Commons, *although* she is a woman ; she is protected against the ruder vicissitudes of public life, *because* she is a woman. Surely it is hardly fair to presume on either the privilege or the immunity. One is reminded of the Roman Emperor who descended into the arena, armed and harnessed, to do battle with a defenceless gladiator. If a woman wants to play cricket, she is quite at liberty to do so (provided that she can find someone to play with her) ; but she ought not to play tricks with the rules.

This is all very well, you may say, but there is nothing new in the phenomenon. Women have always taken a hand in the game of politics, and have generally insisted upon following rules of their own making. That is perfectly true. But until the other day there were limitations to their activities ; there were sacred places where feminism might not penetrate.

To-day all the barriers are down. We cannot recall the old limitations, however much we may regret them : most of us would prefer even the promiscuous osculations of a Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire, to the privileged skittishness of Lady Astor.

The complaint lies really not against feminism but against its abuse ; and not at all against some of the women in Parliament to-day. There is a clear-cut distinction between those women who are and those



who are not keeping the rules. Let me begin with the first class.

Foremost, if only in position, is the Duchess of Atholl, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education. Her type is peculiar to Scotland, a country which seems always able, by some subtle alchemy, to produce a supply of women with masculine minds and feminine temperaments. Very quiet, very sensible and very thorough, the Duchess Kitty would probably be the first to admit the magnitude of her debt to her father, one of the most eminent of Scottish scholars. She has a good share of the gifts with which a fairy godmother would be expected to grace the cradle of a future politician—an excellent platform voice; a facility of speech which, however, will never rise to eloquence; a rare mastery of detail; and an unflagging industry. She will never give us fire-works. She is sound to the point, let us confess it, of dullness. She is inclined to take an official, not to say a red-tape view on most matters, which may in some measure account for her popularity with her male colleagues and with Civil Servants in general. Her outlook is always cautious and often limited; so much so that when in 1925 she attended the meetings of the Assembly of the League of Nations at Geneva the French delegate, a naughty fellow, christened her "La Duchesse Not-at-all."

On the other hand, she will never give us less than the very best that conscientious if uninspired hard work can supply. Withal, she has a personality which makes an equal appeal to her Perthshire con-

stituents and to the more sophisticated audiences to whom she expounds educational policy.

Up to a point there is a kinship between the Duchess and her opposite number on the Labour Benches, Miss Margaret Bondfield. Perhaps it lies in the fact that Margaret Bondfield, like the Duchess, has her roots in the countryside. She is Somerset born, and to this day a long walk in the country probably represents the peak of human happiness for her. Indeed, I confess to a sneaking admiration for "little Maggie." There is something so genuine about her that even upon the rare occasions when party loyalty compels her to patter false economics she does it with conviction. She is in deadly earnest. When she was a girl of fourteen or fifteen she worked as a shop assistant and learnt by bitter, personal experience the discomforts and humiliations of the living-in system. At the first opportunity she began to organize a union among her fellow-workers, and from that day she has given ungrudging service to what she conceives to be the cause of Labour.

Her kinship with the Duchess of Atholl does not extend very far. Maggie Bondfield is a feminist, an unreasonable, even an uncontrolled feminist. The bitterness that she will display over sex questions is in part the result of her early experience and in part a survival of the old suffrage controversies. It is apt to poison her judgment, to incline her to approval of any undertaking managed by women because it is managed by women, to condemnation of any undertaking managed by men because it is managed by

men. It is perhaps for this reason that she was neither so successful nor so popular when in office at the Ministry of Labour as is the Duchess of Atholl at the Board of Education. Her work was a disappointment to many who had had high hopes of her, and it must be admitted that she showed little talent for administration.

On the other hand, she is probably the best speaker of all the women M.P.s, and what she has to say is always worthy of close attention. But she has one gift far surpassing in value the most practised oratory. She has courage, of a sort that the men of her party might well cultivate. She is never afraid to tell her own people unwelcome truths, as on the occasion when she blandly informed the extremists that they were "not fit to run a fried fish shop." Probably the pluckiest thing she ever did was to sign the Blanesborough Report on the "dole." At meeting after meeting the Report was thrown in her teeth by men who had only the vaguest notion what it was all about. A scurrilous campaign, encouraged by people in whose vocabulary neither loyalty nor courage occur, pursued her about the country. She was accused of having signed the Report without reading it, of having betrayed the workers, and of various other shocking offences. But "little Maggie" stood to her guns and gave shot for shot; and the campaign left her on the whole in a stronger position in the Party than ever.

Yes, you cannot help liking "little Maggie." There is something very pleasant and business-like about that homely figure, with the plain black dress and the

brown hair drawn neatly and unfashionably down over the forehead. I fancy that, her sex prejudices notwithstanding, even her stoutest political opponents were rather sorry when in 1924 she and Northampton parted company; and were rather glad when a by-election at Wallsend, Patrick Hastings' old constituency, sent her back in triumph to the House.

Of quite a different type is Miss Susan Lawrence. Here we have the genuine intellectual, the article which our parents, not altogether approving, would have labelled "blue stocking." She hails, appropriately, from Newnham, whence she brought a mathematical reputation and an abiding interest in milk and drains. She was elected as a Conservative to the London County Council in 1910, but joined the Labour Party two years later. In 1923 she successfully contested the Parliamentary division of East Ham, but lost it in the following year. A by-election, however, brought her back to the House with a handsome majority behind her.

She is an uninspired person, without much sense of humour, taking herself and her work very seriously, and concentrating on questions of Local Government. Her judgment is by no means impeccable. She loves arguing for the sake of argument. If you join issue with her, she will sternly oppose you; and should you show signs of agreeing with her point of view, she will begin to shift her ground so that, with the rôles reversed, the controversy may continue.

Though not nearly so attractive a character as Margaret Bondfield, she has much of the latter's

application and a fair portion of her political courage ; in fact it would appear that in the Labour Party at present it is the women who wear the trousers.

It may be conceded at once of the Duchess of Atholl, Miss Bondfield and Miss Lawrence, that if women are to be in Parliament at all, they can produce most of the necessary qualifications ; and the same admission must apply to such ex-members as Mrs. Wintringham and Miss Dorothy Jewson (who on one occasion walked or "lorry-jumped" from London to Norwich rather than be driven in a blackleg train during a railway strike). These people know and keep the rules of the game, which is more than may be said of some of their colleagues of the same sex.

Lady Astor will be fully discussed in the next chapter. But what, for instance, of Mrs. Hilton Philipson ? Why is she in Parliament ? Can anyone, can the lady herself for that matter, give a satisfactory answer to that question ? Her greatness was thrust upon her by the verdict which unseated her husband when he was elected for Berwick-on-Tweed in 1922. In the by-election that followed it was impossible for Captain Philipson, despite his personal innocence, to stand again, and, failing his candidature, the local Tory executive evidently decided to extract full value from the appeal to sentiment by selecting his wife.

To the numerous admirers of Mabel Russell her decision to contest the seat was a surprise. There is no essential connection between the stage and politics, and although there have been great Parliamentarians who might have won an equivalent fame in the

theatre, the converse scarcely applies. Mabel Russell was, unpretentiously, a successful actress—and no more. Her first husband was Mr. Stanley Rhodes, the well-known motorist, who was killed in a terrible accident at Brooklands in 1911. Mabel, who was in the car with him at the time, was so seriously injured that for some weeks it was necessary to keep from her the news of her husband's death. Then she married Captain Philipson, but, although he was known to have Parliamentary aspirations, her own interest in politics amounted to no more than was to be expected from the wife of a prospective candidate. "I have followed two of the greatest professions a woman may attempt," she remarked—"the stage and the profession of wife and mother. The first I have given up. The latter I shall never give up."

Yet she came forward at the by-election, and the voters of Berwick-on-Tweed, not satisfied with the mere *amende honorable* of electing her in her husband's place in 1923, have gone on electing her ever since.

Nor should we be too hard on them, for Mabel is a very charming and piquant personality; and if that were all that is required of a legislator she would be perfect in the part. But that is not all, and it must be owned that, politically speaking, Mabel is almost pathetic. Her speeches would be painfully banal were they not redeemed by a delicious candour, as unusual as it is refreshing. Shortly after her first election a deputation of female Civil Servants called upon her to discuss various matters of alleged importance to women working in Government offices. Mabel,

however, had just discovered Russia, with results most disturbing to her peace of mind. Ignoring the subject under discussion, she gratified the deputation by assuring them that she was "English to the backbone," and begged them to "steer clear of these Socialists." This sort of thing is great fun, but it is scarcely serious politics.

I cannot help believing that in her heart of hearts Mabel is bored with the whole business ; not perhaps with the excitement of being a Member of Parliament—it is hard to rid yourself of that microbe once it has entered your system—but with the humdrum drudgery of the life, the making of speeches (when she cannot avoid them), the interviewing of deputations (especially when they insist on doing their business with Mrs. Philipson and not with Mabel Russell), and the study of Blue Books (even at an irreducible minimum).

In 1924 she nearly retired from political life, feeling that her children, and particularly her son Peter, had claims to which, as a member of the House of Commons, she could not properly respond. Unwise friends over-persuaded her, and she remains, and probably will remain, for as long as the chivalry of Berwick-on-Tweed endures.

But where, you may ask, is the harm in all this ? Granted that Lady Astor is a dangerous woman, who would like to make England dry, to check divorce, to stop betting, to turn us all into Christian Scientists. But Mabel cares for none of these things.

That is true, but, all the same, Mabel, like Lady

Astor, is trying "to have it both ways"; to assume man's privileges without sharing his responsibilities; to use the weapon of her sex when it suits her, and to discard it when it ceases to be of service; to be as good as any man when it comes to a division, and to be a mere weak woman when it comes to a row. So we get this same appalling confusion of sex and the national business. As, for example:

"I was very nervous, but I followed him" (the Home Secretary) "like a little lamb in and out of the lobbies. I think he must have known I wanted to speak to him, because he smiled. I told him what I wanted, and his sympathy and kindness have made me so very bold that if I want to see other ministers now I am not a bit frightened."

There is a great deal of truth in Lord Hugh Cecil's dictum that, where women come into contact with men, there must always be either attraction or irritation. He might have added, "or both."

Then there is Lady Terrington. It would be more correct to say that there was, since happily she is no longer a Member of Parliament. It would be folly, however, to ignore such a portent, which, having occurred once, may well occur again. Her irruption into politics was as sudden as and even less justifiable than that of Mrs. Hilton Philipson; in her case there was no unseated husband to create an appeal *ad misericordiam*. All that can be said is that in 1923 High Wycombe succumbed to one of those strange aberrations which will suddenly overtake even a bucolic or semi-bucolic constituency, with the result



that Lady Terrington joined the ranks of the Liberals in the House. What her qualifications may have been it is difficult to say, but she owned to a fondness for horses and dogs, and professed, subsequent at least to her adoption as candidate, an interest in housing and also, to use her own words, in "social and divorce reform."

Of her style in oratory one specimen will be sufficient. She was addressing the Six Point Group. "I know the men were very kind to me," she is reported to have told those earnest seekers after truth, "because I was kissed by dozens—but it was not so much a question of being kissed by them as really changing their opinions."

In the House of Commons she had little to say for herself, but outside it she acquired fame if not merit by her lawsuit with the *Daily Express*. This newspaper sent a representative to see her and duly published a report of the interview. "If I am elected to Westminster," Lady Terrington was alleged to have said, "I intend to wear my best clothes when I get there. I shall put on my ospreys and my fur coat and my pearls. I do not believe in a woman politician wearing a dull little frock with a Quakerish collar, and keeping all her nicest clothes for her social appearances. It is all humbug."

Lady Terrington sued the *Daily Express* for libel, and a verdict was found for the defendants.

On retiring from Parliament in 1924 she abandoned politics for business, being actively concerned in the formation of a company described as "Specialists in

the application of hygienic complexion treatment." She is to be congratulated on the change of profession.

Finally we have Miss Ellen Wilkinson, probably the quaintest figure on either side of the House to-day. Less than five feet in height, she is easily distinguishable by a flame of shingled red hair, which, through a convenient conformity in colour with her political convictions, has earned her the nickname of "Red Ellen." A more serious politician than Mrs. Hilton Philipson, she has neither the intellect nor the genuineness of Margaret Bondfield or Susan Lawrence. She was educated at Manchester University, joined the Labour Party in 1912, and plunged into the by-ways of political organization. In 1920 she went over to the Communists, under whose ægis she unsuccessfully contested Ashton-under-Lyne. Evidently she found their support more of an embarrassment than an asset, for in 1924 she returned to her old friends, the Labour Party, who rewarded her restored allegiance by putting her in for Middlesbrough East.

She is pure politician, without any industrial experience or intellectual distinction worth mentioning. Her colleagues from the Clyde have nothing to teach her in the art of talking nonsense in public, and during the Coal Strike of 1926 she distinguished herself by the recklessness of her misstatements. In the course of the Strike she paid a visit to the United States, where, she confidently assured the world, she expected to collect at least a million dollars for the miners' funds; if the actual financial results of the tour were pitifully meagre, the fault can certainly

not be imputed to any excessive restraint on Miss Wilkinson's part in carrying out her mission of blackening the institutions and the rulers of her country before audiences of foreigners.

There is a felinity in her dialectical methods which is fairly illustrated by a remark she once made at a meeting in this country about Mrs. Philip Snowden, a member of her own party and a much better woman than herself. She would like, she said, to christen her "the woman who wants slapping."

Lately some of Miss Wilkinson's old friends have been eyeing her with suspicion. They declare that they have heard disquieting rumours about her. When these are disclosed we find it is the old, old story. She has been seen at society functions. She drives about in a car. Like "traitor Thomas," she is in danger of becoming a pet of the privileged classes. If what these critics really mean is that "Red Ellen" is showing signs of dawning good sense, no one will be sorry.

In the House she has made as yet no particular mark. She had a moment of notoriety when Sir Frederick Hall, to the indignation of some of her colleagues, addressed her as "Miss Perky." The lady herself took no offence at the silly fellow, but blushed and giggled like an ordinary woman.

Surely this panorama of feminism is sufficient for the purpose. We have watched Lady Astor tugging at Lord Banbury's coat-tails, Mrs. Hilton Philipson following the Home Secretary about like a little lamb, Lady Terrington preening herself in furs and

ospreys and pearls, and "Red Ellen" making foolish speeches and giggling and blushing like a schoolgirl. As spectacles of misplaced femininity these are hard to equal ; and if we regard them as the price we have to pay for the presence of the Duchess of Atholl, Miss Bondfield and Miss Lawrence, we can only protest that we are getting the worst of the bargain.

I have confined my criticisms to what I have termed the abuse of feminism ; let me conclude with the reservation that this is not to say that there are no dangers in feminism itself. To be governed by Mrs. Hilton Philipson, Lady Astor and Miss Ellen Wilkinson might be a bad joke ; but to be governed by even such legitimate politicians as Miss Bondfield or Miss Lawrence might conceivably not be a joke at all. It is almost an article of faith with most women that what a man really wants is to be mothered ; let them, however, not forget that what he emphatically does not want is to be grandmothered. It is possibly more than a coincidence that the growing participation of women in public life has been accompanied by a notable increase in the volume of restrictive legislation. We remember Mistress Page's threat in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* : "Why, I will exhibit a bill in the Parliament for the putting down of men." And we begin to wonder a little uneasily whether in twenty years' time a new Rousseau, writing a new *Social Contract*, will not be impelled to start with the words, "Man was born free, and is everywhere in—apron strings."

## *LADY ASTOR, M.P.*

THERE is something very satisfactory about a precedent, even when it is merely the kind that sets a bad example to posterity. Possibly we require reassurance that our ancestors were no more fortunate than ourselves ; at any rate those readers who have been perturbed and scandalized by the manifestations of feminism which have been criticized in the previous chapter may well draw comfort from the account given by Lady Mary Wortley Montague of the visit of a party of titled ladies to the House of Lords in the eighteenth century.

“They presented themselves at the door at nine o’clock in the morning,” she wrote, “when Sir William Saunderson respectfully informed them that the Chancellor had made an order against their admittance. The Duchess of Queensberry, as head of the squadron, ‘pished’ at the ill-breeding of a mere lawyer and desired Sir William to let them upstairs privately. After some modest refusals he swore he would not admit them. This being reported, the Peers resolved to starve them out ; and order was made that the doors should not be opened till they had raised their siege. These Amazons now showed

themselves qualified for the duties of foot soldiers ; they stood there until 5 in the afternoon, without sustenance, every now and then plying volleys of thumps, kicks and raps, with so much violence against the door that the speakers in the House were scarce heard. When the Lords were not to be conquered by this, the Duchess (very well apprised of the use of stratagems in war) commanded a silence of half an hour ; and the Chancellor, who thought this a certain proof of their absence (the Commons also being very impatient to enter), gave orders for the opening of the door ; upon which they all rushed in, pushed aside their competitors, and placed themselves in the front rows of the gallery.”

Their subsequent behaviour in the House seems to have afforded ample justification for their future exclusion.

In this passage we surely have an anticipation of Lady Astor. We can almost hear her “pishing” Sir William Saunderson and battering upon the closed door. We could associate with her ingenious brain the stratagem by which admittance was at last gained, and we could see her heading the rush of triumphant peeresses into those sacred precincts. Taking courage, therefore, from the time-honoured reflection that there is nothing new in the world, let us come quickly to our subject, Lady Astor.

First, then, let it be noted that although Lady Astor is not a young man, she counts as one on a division ; and secondly that, while hitherto the victims of these observations have all been His

Majesty's subjects, Lady Astor, technically English, is by birth an American.

Nancy Langhorne came of a good Virginian family. Her early home was Mirador, near Richmond (Virginia), an attractive, low, red brick house, Georgian in style and surrounded by beautiful country. The scenery was rather English in character, though on a larger scale, with high hills and narrow valleys. There was not too much money in the purse in those early days, but the family at Mirador seems to have enjoyed most of the advantages that money brings, such as hunting, riding and keeping open house. The seven young Langhorne—five girls and two boys—led a wild out-of-door life, and from learning to ride bareback over the hills as children all grew up to good seats and excellent hands. Though Lady Astor no longer follows the hounds she is still as fearless on horseback as on a platform, and is only surpassed (in riding but not in speaking) by her sister Phyllis, now Mrs. Robert Brand.

Stories of Nancy Langhorne's early life with her brothers and sisters, and of the frequent scrapes in which her high spirits, then as now, involved her, are the delight of her friends. Her chief clashes were with her father, who, though evidently an exhilarating companion when in good humour, employed methods of restraint that were drastic, primitive and obviously futile. "Hold your horses, Nannie!"—his formula when his troublesome daughter was getting above herself—must have been in frequent though ineffective use. Neither words, nor even blows, could

check those exuberant spirits, and when, as a last resort, she was ordered to bed for a week at a time, she would rise from it with accumulated energy to torment and enliven the household with fresh audacities.

We all have our little inconsistencies. To-day Lady Astor still prides herself on being a born rebel, without respect for the powers that be; yet she has considerable regard for her own authority. Although her methods differ from her father's, she is no more inclined than he was to tolerate insubordination from her children or from those under her. We are reminded of the promoted poacher, whose respect for the game preserves of his employer is as profound as his methods of protecting them from marauders are efficient. After all, to be consistent is to be very dull, and whatever else she may be, Lady Astor is not that.

Nancy Langhorne, who must have been very pretty—as she is still, with her small slight figure, her fair hair and her gay, vital face—was married at an early age to Mr. R. G. Shaw, a neighbouring landowner.

After the marriage—an unhappy and short-lived affair—Mr. Shaw took her to live in Boston. She cannot have found the atmosphere, with its culture circles and its stiff conventions, at all congenial; and Boston, which has its own way of looking upon a wicked world, probably expressed its disapproval of the strange young creature lately arrived from the backwoods. Before we judge harshly let us remember that what Boston thought of Nancy Shaw



in the earlier years of the century, a good many other places have thought of Lady Astor in subsequent years.

After her son was born Mrs. Shaw obtained a divorce. It is not necessary or desirable to enter into details, but it is obvious to anyone who is acquainted with the facts that, in a very difficult and disagreeable situation, she only did what she felt was right and fair by all the parties concerned. Her husband's father and near relations stood by her ; it was on their advice that she began the proceedings ; and she has remained ever since on the best of terms with them. When, many years later, she spoke in the House of Commons against the Divorce Law Reform Bill, she was fiercely criticized and accused of the worst kind of hypocrisy. Her speech, however, was nothing more than an error of judgment, an instance of her notorious lack of worldly wisdom. It was just because she knew how unpleasant for herself the consequences would be that she felt obliged to speak. Silence, in her opinion, would have been cowardice, and her attitude, though doubtless mistaken, was certainly courageous.

When her divorce was over, she came to England with her child and rebuilt her life over here. Her wit and charm, as well as her skill and pluck in the hunting-field, brought her many friends in this country, and she had a great social success. There is a story about her at this time which is typical of her quick-witted audacity. When out hunting one day she was thrown at a dangerous jump and found herself up to the neck in a muddy ditch. Hearing the rest

of the field approaching, she called out to them to be careful, and was answered reassuringly from the other side of the hedge by a voice which she recognized as belonging to a man with well-known social ambitions.

"Come and help me out," she called, as he reined in his horse.

"All right," he called back, but added cautiously, "Who is it?"

"The Duchess of —," she shouted with great presence of mind. "Hurry up!"

The man dismounted quickly, came to her assistance and helped her to recapture her horse, concealing his disappointment as best he could.

Mrs. Shaw married Mr. Waldorf Astor in 1906, and Cliveden, their place on the river, quickly became a centre for all manner of interesting people. Smart society, social workers, politicians, racing enthusiasts, writers and the young of every kind from every corner of the world enjoy her lavish and indiscriminating hospitality. It is said that anybody can spend an uninvited week-end at Cliveden, for host and hostess will each assume that the stranger is the other's guest, or at the worst the friend of a friend.\*

In 1911 Waldorf Astor was elected to Parliament as Conservative member for Plymouth. Both he and his wife are deservedly beloved in the constituency for all the good work they have done, and are still

\* I know someone who spent a very pleasant week-end at Cliveden and has dined at the house in St. James's Square. He has never spoken to Lady Astor before, during, or since.

doing there; and he would have been the first to admit how much of Plymouth's allegiance to his family was a tribute to her personality.

Fighting an election is Nancy Astor's greatest gift, her energy, her kindness of heart and her facility in repartee making her the most formidable of opponents and the stoutest of allies. I have heard that she will go round the back streets of Plymouth ringing a large dinner-bell to bring people to their doors and windows. As soon as she has collected her audience she addresses it, and hecklers of both sexes usually find that they get the worst of an encounter.

Stories of her retorts are innumerable. One of her workers told me that when taunted with her great wealth she invariably carries the war into the enemy's country. "Well, wouldn't you wear pearls if you had them?" "Don't you wish you had money like me? And do you think you would work as hard as I do if you had?"

Not everyone can say such things with impunity, but Lady Astor can and does.

One heckler—a man—tried to discomfit her by quoting the passage from the New Testament which describes the difficulties besetting the rich man who seeks to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. She replied: "But Christ did not forget the rich man. It was to a rich man and a man in authority that He said, 'I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.'" The devil can cite Scripture for his purposes, but if he plays that game with Lady Astor, he may find his most apt quotations capped.

When the first Lord Astor died in 1919, his son Waldorf, who was then Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, had perforce to resign his seat at Plymouth and enter the House of Lords. After some hesitation Lady Astor accepted an invitation to stand for Parliament in her husband's stead. Her success in the by-election was a surprise to many and made a profound impression in America. Although she was not the first woman to be elected to Parliament, she was the first to take her seat.

It cannot be denied that she has done some good work in the House of Commons, especially for women, but her deplorable habit of constant interruption has made her unpopular both there and in the country; not only with her opponents, but to an even greater extent with her own Party. English people take their institutions seriously and are inclined to resent flippancy or disrespect towards them, at least from anyone who cannot be flippant with the English touch. "Will the noble lady please continue her question and not lecture the House?" begged the Speaker on one occasion. She accepted the rebuke with unwonted meekness, merely retorting with a smile, "But they do need it, Sir." She then continued her question as desired.

In that incident, perhaps, we reach the root of the trouble. Lady Astor is convinced that the House of Commons, indeed the whole world, needs lecturing. She has yet to learn that even if it does, it will not take its lectures from her.

Naturally she cannot be expected to placate those

irreconcilables to whom there is something indecent in the presence of any woman, however discreet, in the House of Commons. The late Sir Henry Craik was one of those to whom the sight of the little fair lady in her dark coat and skirt, wide collar and black toque was an abiding outrage. "He passes me," she was heard to say, "as if I were Lady Godiva."

Yet, prejudice notwithstanding, she has many firm friends in the House of Commons, particularly among the Labour members. She has made her house a meeting-place for M.P.s of all parties, a place where they can freely discuss the questions of the day; and she takes a never-ending delight in bringing people together.

Undoubtedly she would wield far greater influence were her opinions and, above all, her manner of expressing them less provocative. Her campaign against the drink traffic is a case in point. Few people on either side are able to be temperate about temperance, and Lady Astor is no exception. Yet she is not so extreme in her views as her opponents would have us believe, and her sincerity is beyond a doubt.

She is a convinced and proselytizing Christian Scientist and has an ardent hatred for the Church of Rome. To her it represents a very real evil—or is it only a centuries-old "error"? To a young Conservative member of Parliament who shares her opinions on Rome, though not on many other subjects, she once remarked: "You and I may not be good Christians, but we are at least good Protestants."

There is a profundity in this statement of which she was probably unconscious.

Many of Lady Astor's friends would be glad to see her retire from Parliament. There are signs that the strain of public life, added to the responsibility of managing a couple of large houses and looking after six children, is becoming too much for her. Indeed, many of those indiscretions, those errors of judgment and of taste which bring her criticism and dislike from people who do not understand her, can be traced to nervous fatigue; and because she is a Christian Scientist it is against her principles to own herself nervous or tired.

She is one of those people who can never be persuaded to take a rest. Some years ago, when she was on the edge of a breakdown, her friends and doctors at last succeeded in inducing her to return to her native country for a rest-cure. As her ship sailed away they congratulated themselves on a hard task achieved. But their satisfaction was premature. The patient had hardly been on board twenty-four hours before she had been all over the ship, visiting among other places the engine-room, where she made friends at once with the stokers. Thereafter all idea of rest disappeared, and for the remainder of the voyage she was the confidante, adviser and friend to the better part of the crew, organizing a nightly concert for their entertainment. The men said that never before in their experience had a first-class lady passenger visited them or shown any interest in their lives and condition; and when she landed they gave

her a tremendous ovation. That was how her "rest-cure" began.

There are really two Nancy Astors. The first is a warm, attractive, gay-hearted little person with a sharp and witty tongue and a keen sense of the ridiculous; fond of hunting, racing and golf, of playing fives on the roof of her London house, or tennis in the big covered court at Cliveden; a lover of rowdy games which involve dressing up, wearing a mask or a false nose, and acting. This is the Nancy Astor who entertained the patients at the great Canadian Hospital at Cliveden so magnificently during the War, and who is to-day a source of perennial amusement to her guests and her friends.

The second Nancy Astor is a hard-working enthusiast, a fanatic on certain social questions; a Christian Scientist and a teetotaler; a censor of all who disagree with her or whose life is on differing lines; apt to make one rule of conduct for herself and her friends, and quite another for the rest of the world, which she will lecture with the conviction and authority of a head-mistress.

This is the Nancy Astor who is a perpetual source of anxiety to those who know and love her, who seems to be never happy when she is not in hot water, and whose very merits are her undoing. Her fearlessness, her non-acceptance of defeat, her untiring devotion to what she believes to be right are qualities which have a double edge for her. Despite her warm-heartedness and her unusually great gift of sympathy, she has an uncanny knack of saying the wrong thing,

or, what is even worse, the right thing at the wrong time. When she, the wife of the owner of a famous racing-stable, rises in the House to speak against taxes on betting, her friends groan inwardly ; but her enemies smile complacently and say, " We told you so."

It is easy for those who dislike Lady Astor to find good and just reasons for their sentiment. Her faults are obvious. Her love of dictation, of forcing her opinions upon others, of belittling the righteousness of her opponents ; her lapses from good taste and her failure, for all her generosity, to realize the enormous advantages that her riches give her ; these things are undeniable. But when this has been said, the rest is—not silence, for the word has little connection with Lady Astor—but admiration and gratitude for her manifold kindnesses to anyone in trouble or anxiety ; for her genuine unselfishness ; for her unswerving loyalty ; and for her unceasing delight in and power of giving people pleasure. She has the largeness of heart that will give and give again. The mere sacrifice of money may mean very little to her ; but if she were a poor woman she would offer the last farthing in her purse, and as a rich woman she will offer the last atom of her energy, for the happiness and well-being of others.



## TWO UNDER-SECRETARIES

*The Hon. W. A. Ormsby-Gore, M.P. and Major  
Walter Elliot, M.P.*

THERE is no real reason why I should bracket together Mr. William Ormsby-Gore and Major Walter Elliot, unless it be to point an already obvious contrast. Certain characteristics they have in common : supreme self-confidence, a retentive memory, a wide education and—a peculiar appearance. But at that point similarity abruptly ceases.

Ormsby-Gore is one of those fortunate people who age with difficulty. Although he is older than Elliot and is now climbing through the “forties,” he is still referred to by his juniors (Elliot among others) as “young Billy Gore.” For this happy state of affairs he has several circumstances to thank. Entering the House of Commons when he had only just ceased to be an undergraduate, he was at once talked of as “one of our rising young men.” The label has its dangers as well as its advantages, for people become so accustomed to it that they will go on applying it to some particular person almost mechanically ; until, one morning, they wake up to discover that he

has failed to rise and is no longer young. Undoubtedly, however, the label has had a juvenating effect on Billy Gore. Perhaps it has helped him to preserve his youthful appearance, for, although no longer quite so cherubic of countenance as he used to be, he would still be taken for a man in the early "thirties." He certainly has the appearance of youth. And he also has the cock-sure manner of youth. He has a wide knowledge of many subjects, of history, architecture, pictures, machinery, literature, philately, chemistry—to name only a few of them; and he is prepared at all times and at any length to discuss them. Although he presumably adds to his repertory, you feel that he really acquired the bulk of his information before he was twenty-five. He has no diffidence, false or otherwise, about displaying his knowledge; he will produce it, not ostentatiously, but with an air of easy confidence, much as a child, fresh from a history lesson, will put its elders right about the date of the Battle of Tewkesbury.

I have heard that when he was up at Oxford he once went to lunch with the Warden of New College. Among the other guests was at least one man of high authority on artistic subjects. The conversation drifted to Italian pictures, and for a considerable space of time Billy Gore held forth on the Uffizi Gallery and the Florentine School generally. The information he gave was clear and accurate. His fellow-guests, much impressed, were content to listen to a young man who knew his subject so well. Afterwards, however, they were not so pleased when they

discovered that he had never seen the Uffizi Gallery or been to Italy.

Sometimes his friends used to amuse themselves by drawing him on one of his numerous subjects. "How did you find time to learn so much?" they would end by asking; and his invariable answer was, "Well, I am twenty-five (or twenty-six or twenty-seven)"; for he is always scrupulously accurate in details.

He has the gift of expressing himself well and clearly on subjects he understands; that is, in my experience, on every subject, for I have never heard one broached on which he was completely ignorant. Sometimes, perhaps, the stream of informative talk flows a little thinly; but he can always carry off a situation by his useful trick of making others in the company feel that they cannot possibly know as much as he does about any topic that may arise. The trick, though useful, does not make for popularity. The man who is always right is rather a nuisance. We long to catch him tripping, and when we fail, we love him none the better for his triumph. A superior manner, verging on the supercilious—all unconscious though it may be—is even more exasperating when combined with such confident infallibility.

In Billy Gore this cock-sureness is accentuated by certain personal characteristics, by the long, pointed nose, the short upper lip, the slight drawl, and, above all, the habitual and faintly provocative smile. It was this smile which, during a stormy scene in the House,

provoked an angry Labour member to shake his fist and shout, "Take that grin off your face!" His habit, too, of looking a little above the head of the person to whom he is talking, especially when he is answering a question put to him, is at first disconcerting.

But these are minor matters. Billy Gore is far too clever not to recognize his own as well as other people's limitations; and if one part of him does feel that he is rather an unusual person, this is hardly surprising when we consider what he is and what his life has been.

He is the only son of Lord and Lady Harlech of Brogyntyn, Oswestry. Lord Harlech, who was in the Coldstream and commanded the Welsh Guards in the War, sat in Parliament as Conservative member for Oswestry for three years, after which he succeeded to the title. Since then he has led the life of a country gentleman, enjoying its duties and pleasures and looking on men and things with a quiet, tolerant humour. Lady Harlech, a sister of Lord Huntly, is a shrewd, amusing, very persistent Scotswoman, and like her husband is devoted to hunting.

No one can charge Billy Gore with climbing to political power on the reputation of his family. Indeed it is rather surprising to find such ability and intellectual capacity in the son of a Shropshire squire, brought up amid the most exclusive and interbred county society in England. Yet so it has happened. As a child he was left very much alone. His parents, though naturally fond and proud of their

only son, felt it would be good for him to learn independence. Acting on this theory, they constantly went away during his holidays and left him to organize his own amusements and occupations. It was during these lonely holidays that he picked up much of his out-of-the-way information and experience. For instance, when he was about fifteen, he made friends with an engine-driver on the local line; and some small part, anyhow, of Billy Gore's knowledge of machinery dates from the days when, as a volunteer stoker, he travelled backwards and forwards on his friend's engine.

This early training taught him self-dependence, and something else besides. He is far from unsociable, but he has in him a little of Mr. Kipling's "Cat Who Walked by Himself"—not that there is anything feline about Billy Gore. A faint flavour of solitariness still hangs about him; it is just this aloofness which accounts for his occasional lack of skill in handling people; and neither Eton nor Oxford, neither Parliament nor the Army has cured him of it.

He was twenty-five when he got in for Denbigh Boroughs after one of the toughest contests of a toughly contested Election. His majority, I think, was only three or four, and he owed it mainly to his mother, who worked untiringly on his behalf. I have always heard that she clinched the issue by converting the only Welsh grocer who in the whole history of Parliamentary institutions has ever been persuaded to vote Conservative.

In those early days in the House of Commons, Billy

Gore was the *enfant terrible* of the Tory Party. He played a joyous part in the ructions that followed the Parliament Bill—(let us remember in excuse for lost tempers that we had an exceptionally hot summer that year !). He took especial delight in baiting without respite or scruple the then protagonist of Welsh Liberalism, Sir Alfred Mond. He defended the Welsh Church from its despoilers with an unecclesiastical rowdiness. In fact, he thoroughly enjoyed himself. I remember hearing him, about this time, describe with considerable gusto how he and his staunch ally, Charlie Mills,\* punctuated the speech of a hated Cabinet Minister with the noises of a stage crowd. It was all great fun, though as a prelude to statesmanship it might have been bettered. Yet for all these bursts of exuberance he acquired merit as an enthusiastically hard worker and a good speaker ; and it was at this period that he began to be talked of, in the Councils of the Party, as “ one of our rising young men.”

He was particularly fortunate in his marriage. Lady Beatrice, clever, amusing and charming, combined the traditional humour and independence of character of the Cecils with high spirits and a fearless outspokenness. She was able, even at this stage, to bring qualities invaluable to Billy Gore's career.

When the War broke out he joined the Oxfordshire Hussars, going with them on service to Egypt. Not only was soldiering uncongenial to him, but he had

\* Another young Conservative M.P., killed in the War.

little aptitude for it, although there is not the slightest reflection on his courage. The War brought out some of the obvious defects in his character. Well equipped as he had shown himself to be for success and happiness in his public and private life, he had his heel of Achilles. He had a singular inability to understand the ordinary man, and the ordinary man, who existed in large numbers in the British Army, was inclined to resent what he regarded as a superior manner. Had this apparent assumption of superiority been combined with superlative efficiency, it might have escaped comment. But it was not. Billy Gore's mental habit of "walking by himself" had inclined him to be a law unto himself, a habit of mind not encouraged by the little red manuals of military training. Probably the routine of regimental business was irksome to him. He went through it from a sense of duty, but without enthusiasm, and in consequence without much success. To his superior officers and to the men he commanded he was always an enigma. The reports they had heard of Billy Gore as one of our coming rulers were scarcely borne out by his work, and in the end they probably fell back on that most popular, trite and self-complacent of military syllogisms: "All politicians are mere windbags; so-and-so is a politician; therefore so-and-so is a mere windbag." And Billy Gore really did not care. A trivial lapse on his part was once reported to his Commanding Officer with the additional complaint "that this officer, when remonstrated with, did not even express suitable regret."

He was more in his element as Intelligence Officer to the Arab Bureau ; but it was not until he went home to become Parliamentary Private Secretary to Lord Milner and later Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet that his friends felt he was at last back in his rightful surroundings.

His military experience, however, has probably helped him in his career more than, at one time at least, he would have been disposed to admit. The Billy Gore of to-day has more of the "common touch" than the Billy Gore of 1914. Since the War his political duties have taken him into different parts of the world—Palestine, East and West Africa, the West Indies, Geneva—places where a superior manner or a clumsy handling of men would have been fatal. But he has come through with credit and an enhanced reputation. Before he went to Kenya, the white settlers, who have a permanent suspicion of Downing Street and disliked what they had heard of Billy Gore, promised him an unpleasantly warm reception. They ended by giving him—a pleasantly warm send-off, and he left an astonishingly favourable impression behind.

When he became Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in the short-lived Conservative Government of 1922, people were a little inclined to cavil at the appointment ; but when he returned to the post in 1924 not a voice was raised in protest. When the Labour Government fell that autumn, he was still out in Kenya as Chairman of the East African Parliamentary Commission, but his wife took charge of



his election for him and secured him an increased majority.

On the platform, too, his effectiveness has grown in recent years. Not very long ago he addressed a meeting of the Women's Unionist Association in London. It is usually a dreary business to speak to the converted on a hot afternoon in the Queen's Hall, and the Home Secretary, who preceded Billy Gore, had done everything that was humanly possible to lull the audience into slumber. Then Billy Gore got up. He spoke on Imperial Preference, a subject on which he feels strongly, and as he warmed to his theme the audience shook themselves, sat up and listened. He has a strong platform voice, and it now rang out, surmounting the bad acoustics of the building with ease. Gone was the provoking grin, vanished the supercilious manner. He had a message, and he gave it, clearly, precisely, and with just that touch of emotion which carries an audience with the speaker. It was an inspiring speech, finely delivered.

Some few of his faults remain, the more apparent because they lie on the surface. From time to time the old superiority and tactlessness peep out to his undoing. His quick temper, his readiness "to go through the roof" on very little provocation, outbursts which become more frequent when he is suffering from one of his bad attacks of hay fever, continue to give occasional offence.

But these are small matters compared with his good qualities, his fertility of mind, breadth of outlook, industry, kindness of heart, loyalty, generosity and

keen powers of enjoyment ; to these, and to their undoubted increase with the passing years, let us pay a tribute of admiration and respect.

Major Walter Elliot, D.Sc., M.P., etc., was, unlike Billy Gore, not destined from his youth for a political career. Had anyone told him in 1914 that in 1927 he would be an Under-Secretary and marked out for still higher office in the near future, he would have laughed and given a thousand reasons, illustrated with ingenious metaphors, why such a thing was impossible.

Walter Elliot is the son of one of the most popular and prosperous cattle auctioneers in the South of Scotland. His original profession was medicine, and with that in view he was educated at the Glasgow Academy and University, where he took his degree. His high spirits, quick wit and overflowing energy made him very popular with his fellows, and I have little doubt that he was often a ringleader in the " rags " for which Glasgow, and particularly Glasgow medical students, are notorious.

During the war he was regimental surgeon to the Scots Greys. Although he was a new experience to the officers of that regiment, who hardly knew what to make of him, few if any medical officers can have been more beloved by comrades and patients. Such popularity is easy to understand when we mark his unfailing good humour, his geniality and his genuine love of his fellow-beings, combined as these qualities are with a gift of vivid, picturesque language which makes him the most engaging and stimulating of companions.

His conversational powers are unusual. Like Billy Gore, he is ready to talk and lay down the law on any subject, but, unlike him, he quickly betrays himself when he is discussing a question he does not fully understand. Nor does he mind giving himself away. "Ignorance of a subject," he often declares, "never deters me from expressing my opinion on it." He certainly expresses that opinion well, and his picturesque phrasing, together with a broad Scots accent (always popular with the English), enables him to put over, at least for the moment, the most remarkable inaccuracies and paradoxes. His love of nonsense is such that he will even talk it about his own subjects, and there are few more entertaining experiences than to listen to Walter Elliot discoursing wildly and imaginatively on the higher branches of mathematics, of which as a Doctor of Science he presumably knows the secrets.

After the War he was asked to stand for Parliament for his native constituency of Lanark. He won the seat by a substantial majority, and soon made his mark in the difficult Parliament of 1918-1922.

By nature hard-working and ambitious, he may have been led to throw himself into public affairs more thoroughly than otherwise he would have done by a sudden and painful tragedy in his life. He and his wife, whom he had just married, were climbing in the Highlands when, as the result of a terrible accident, she was killed and he himself badly injured.

In the House he quickly won a reputation as a speaker. He has the gift of coining phrases that stick

in the memory, as : " This island is surrounded by an antiseptic fluid." Or again, when in a lecture on animal nutrition he explained how bones were living tissues and " not merely the pillars or girders of the body." His imagery, though sometimes fanciful, is generally concrete, and always illustrates the point he is trying to make.

His early successes, however, were not only of a dialectical kind. In 1920 he played a leading part in the last-minute negotiations in the House which led to the calling off of the threatened General Strike ; and the midnight conference which produced the compromise of " Black Friday " was largely his work.

Thereafter, with one set-back, he has gone from strength to strength. The set-back occurred in 1923, when, partly, I think, through neglect of the minor duties and graces of a county member, he lost his Lanarkshire seat. Another constituency, however, was soon found for him, and a by-election brought him back to Parliament as one of the members for Glasgow.

" One of the members for Glasgow ! " Walter Elliot once exclaimed. " That is a terrible thing to say about anyone." Indeed, it is strange to find a Scotsman and a Tory in a company which has all too few of either breed. The representatives of a mixed electorate of Irish, Poles, Lithuanians, Russians and Scotsmen may continue to preach internationalism with noisy ineffectiveness and brotherly love in the manner of a stairhead row. " But I," Major Elliot maintained, " when hoisting my flag the Union Jack, do not intend to blush for it before any Red Flag that is

ever run up." And he—there's the rub—besides being a good Tory is as native a Clydesider as the best of his colleagues.

It was, I think, in the course of the same speech that Walter Elliot reminded his audience that the Conservatives have a majority of only one in Scotland; so that if he himself were to fall off the platform and break his neck the Party would have to mourn the loss not only of a man cut off in his prime but of the Conservative majority in Scotland.

Shortly after his election for Kelvingrove, Walter Elliot became Under-Secretary for Health at the Scottish Office, and it is safe to prophesy that before many years have passed we shall see him in the Cabinet.

One of Walter Elliot's most attractive and characteristic qualities is his power of throwing himself heart and soul into whatever he may be doing at the moment. He can be the presiding spirit of a noisy country house party. At one moment he will be playing rowdy games, dressing up, giving admirable imitations of different types of Scots making after-dinner speeches. The next moment you will see him fling aside his fooling and join the more serious guetss in a heavy discussion of world economics. Whatever the occupation may be it absorbs all his energies, and in this, again, you feel the contrast with Billy Gore, who, with a wider if less specialized knowledge, somehow always gives the impression of only touching lightly upon the subject under discussion, of having reached its core without any effort or strain.

The memories of both men are dangerously good.

Walter Elliot will recall, after the lapse of several years, exactly who said what at a particular phase in a game or a conversation. Billy Gore has always an answer ready to the most random and recondite of questions. The ordinary mortal will be wise to be careful of his facts before he makes a statement in the presence of either. Billy Gore will correct you gently but inexorably, and you feel that surely you will know better another time than to forget to verify your quotations. Walter Elliot will put you right gaily, with a laugh and a metaphor or two, so that, taking his reproof lightly, you will probably repeat your error or at least commit several similar errors in his presence in the future. You cannot possibly feel in awe of a man who is so ready to laugh at himself, so unostentatiously learned, and so deeply interested in the lives and opinions of other people.

He makes friends easily and quickly of both sexes, and keeps the friendships. In this his remarkable memory helps him, for on meeting someone whom he has not seen for a considerable time he will often refer in the most natural way to something that person said or did at their last meeting. This is the subtlest of compliments, since it cannot be counterfeited, and it will never fail to please even those who consider themselves impervious to flattery.

Excellent company though he is, he has a vein of obstinacy which can be irritating. When in the mood he can recall the pragmatical Scot whom he mimics so admirably ; and when he has made up his mind on a certain course of action he will defend it with a

stubborn resourcefulness against which reason will beat in vain.

Despite his energy and vitality, he has no love of outdoor exercise. He will enjoy a long country walk with a friend, but his object is talk and companionship rather than bodily health. He dislikes games like golf and tennis. He has no use for sport. But he is always ready to play hide-and-seek all over the house with children, or to take part in charades or theatricals. He is always ready, too, to spend much of his well-earned Parliamentary holidays in bacteriological research.

It is amusing as well as instructive to listen to Walter Elliot and Billy Gore in conversation. Billy Gore has an elementary knowledge of science, and learnt as much chemistry as Eton could teach him : so that in these fields, though on the defensive, he can fight a good rear-guard action. He has travelled more widely than Walter Elliot, and here will score a point or two ; but when he broaches those more general subjects which he has made especially his own—literature, art, music, history, politics—he will find the other waiting for him at every turn in the debate. On literature, at least, I think the issue would go to Walter Elliot. In addition to the ordinary reading which most men manage to crowd into their lives, Elliot prides himself on being an authority second to none on “slush” literature. Like his compatriot, Lord Balfour, he has a passion for detective stories, and has probably read more of the works of Mr. Edgar Wallace than anyone in England, with the exception of those to whom

the study of this prolific author is a whole-time occupation.

In an argument of any length, I am inclined to think that Walter Elliot would bear off the prize. He has a louder voice than Billy Gore ; he never drawls ; and he will never admit defeat. Like Doctor Johnson, " If his pistol misses fire he knocks you down with the butt end of it."

So we may leave our two under-secretaries, each well started on a career which, save for the accidents of politics, should bring them in time to Cabinet rank. If Walter Elliot's progress has been the swifter, there has been a sureness about Billy Gore's which is significant. And if Walter Elliot's fortunes rest on the insecure foundations of a Glasgow electorate, Billy Gore's must in the course of nature be prejudiced by translation to the House of Lords. For Walter Elliot we may predict a future in which the big social and industrial problems of the day will loom large ; for Billy Gore, perhaps, positions that will take him more and more overseas. Neither is quite ready for his destiny ; to each I hope it will come—but not just yet.



## YOUNG LABOUR

THE late Lord Fisher once created a character whom, I believe, he called Buggins, and who was, he declared, responsible for most of the troubles of the British Empire. There were two infallible marks by which Buggins could be identified. He always had to be found a job ; and he was always somebody's nephew. Buggins, in short, was merely an old friend under a new name. He had his heyday of prosperity in the eighteenth century, when a number of lucrative sinecures existed expressly for his benefit. In the nineteenth century he began to become unfashionable. In the twentieth public opinion is definitely unkind to him. It was Buggins, in the shape of Lord George Sackville, who nearly lost the Battle of Minden and quite lost the American Colonies. It was Buggins who got loose on such military adventures as the Walcheren Expedition and the Crimean Campaign. It was Buggins, again, who is the hero of one of Mr. Belloc's Cautionary Rhymes :

*“ The Duke—his aged grandsire—bore  
The shame till he could bear no more.  
He rallied his declining powers,  
Summoned the youth to Brockley Towers,*

*And bitterly addressed him thus :  
 ‘ Sir ! you have disappointed us !  
 We had intended you to be  
 The next Prime Minister but three :  
 The stocks were sold ; the Press was squared ;  
 The Middle Class was quite prepared.  
 But as it is ! . . . My language fails !  
 Go out and govern New South Wales ! ’ ”*

Yet, no matter how unpopular a figure Buggins may be, so long as there are lucrative jobs and impecunious nephews, he will survive. It is true that he is at his happiest in a drawing-room, and that his uncle or aunt will operate more effectively from Belgrave Square than, say, from Seven Dials ; but that he is no mere ornament of our upper classes is the sad conclusion we reach after a survey of the Labour Party to-day.

Off-hand, you would suppose that the Labour benches were no place for Buggins, that there at least you would find talent unfettered by nepotism or privilege ; and in a sense you would be right. The Buggins of the old model, however potent the avuncular influence, could scarcely pass through the successive filters of a local Labour executive and a Parliamentary election. Then what, you inquire in your bewilderment, is the secret of those serried rows of middle-aged mediocrities ? Surely a party unburdened by the dead weight of influence should do better than that ! It should ; but you have forgotten that Buggins, like other institutions, adapts himself

to the changing times. He is no longer the first cousin once removed of a duke ; to-day he is a respectable Trades Union official.

Let us see how it all works. We will suppose that in a certain constituency the Amalgamated Society of Lamplighters is predominant in the councils of the local Labour Party. Naturally, they wish the Labour candidate to be a good local lamplighter, and probably they are strong enough to carry their point. At the same time they have to reckon with other trade organizations in the district, numerically less powerful, but whose support is essential. There is, for instance, the union of Organ-grinders, with a good roll of members in this constituency and an even better roll in another constituency twenty miles away. It so happens that in this second constituency there is a promising young man who, under happier circumstances, would be the Labour candidate there. Unfortunately, he is a Lamplighter. "Very well," say the Organ-grinders to their comrades in the first town, "if you Lamplighters want one of your men down there, we are going to have one of *our* men here. Of course, if you like to put up an Organ-grinder as your candidate, we'll take this promising young Lamplighter as ours." The Lamplighters in the first constituency scratch their heads and say they would rather not. Theirs, after all, is a Lamplighters' seat, so why should they present it to another Union ? "All right," rejoin their neighbours, "we'll send you our promising young Lamplighter, and you can run him, and we'll put up one of our Organ-grinders here."

Again the Lamplighters scratch their heads. It is awkward, very awkward. Not that they have anything against young Henry Smith from over the way ; by all accounts he was a very sound Trades Unionist and all that. But it had been an understood thing that old Tom Jones, the local Secretary, should be the next candidate. They couldn't turn down old Tom, could they ? Not one of your clever chaps ; a bit slow, perhaps ; getting on in years now, too. But still—a promise *was* a promise.

So they put up Tom Jones and the local Organ-grinders support him, knowing that the Lamplighters in the other town are going to vote for their man. As for poor young Henry, with more brains in his little finger than either of the chosen candidates has in his head, he must satisfy his political ambitions as best he may in street-corner meetings on behalf of someone else.

The process, which in a less pure and democratically organized party might be termed log-rolling, does not end with the triumph of Mr. Jones and the disappointment of Mr. Smith. The jealousy which notoriously exists between Unions finds its reflection in the ranks of any particular union. A Labour candidate, like the candidate for the Presidency of the United States, is too often not the man with the best brains or the highest character, but the man who has made the fewest enemies. This is not a system which favours the young (who have got to be kept in their place) or the pushful (who are always unpopular) or the clever (who are universally distrusted).

All this did not matter very much so long as a Labour Member's chief qualifications for Parliamentary honours were a good Union record and a sound pair of lungs ; but when it became necessary in 1924 to form a Labour Cabinet, the paucity of administrative and debating talent became pitifully obvious, and Mr. Ramsay MacDonald (like the lord in the Bible who gave the great feast) was constrained to go forth into the highways and drag bewildered but amenable outsiders to his board.

That was a lesson of which the moral has not been sufficiently digested. Some effort, it is true, has been made to attract promising young men, but the old system continues, and the old soldiers are a little inclined to look down their noses at such pert recruits as Mr. Oswald Mosley, of whom some account has been given in an earlier chapter.

Are there, then, no young men of promise in the Labour Party proper ? I put this question not long ago to a man of recognized experience. "Certainly there are," was his reply ; "but the trouble is that hardly any of them are in the House of Commons." That is to say, we may find them among Trades Union officials, or even in the pits and the workshops, or lecturing at the newer Universities ; with a few notable exceptions, we shall not find them in Parliament ; and even these exceptions, by comparison with the Young Conservatives, are positively middle-aged.

Maxton is one of the most prominent of the younger men, and he was thirty-seven when he was first elected

for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow in 1922. He retains, however, the looks and the temper of youth. He came to Parliament with the reputation of being one of the most dangerous hotheads in Scotland. He had been a teacher by profession; during the War he had carried pacifism and anti-conscriptionism to a point at which the authorities stepped in and sent him to prison for twelve months; and when he emerged his speeches dripped bitterness. His fellow-members in the House of Commons awaited his arrival with a thrill of expectation. "Here at last," they told each other, "is the real thing." Nor did his appearance disappoint them. They saw a man who might have walked straight out of the pages of a history of the French Revolution. As they observed those hollow, swarthy cheeks, those deep-set burning eyes, that smooth, black hair and that fleshless frame, they could almost hear the thunder of the barricades, the creaking of the tumbrils and the clash of the guillotine.

Life, however, is full of disappointments, and in the House of Commons the sad moment usually comes when the devil is discovered to be not so black as he has been painted; when the Tory finds that the average Labour Member is not a paid agitator, without honour, patriotism or morals; when the Labour Member finds that the average Tory bears no recognizable resemblance to the caricatures of capitalists in the *Daily Herald*. So it was with Maxton. He was all right at first. He looked his part to perfection. Then, in a moment of carelessness, he smiled, and the

smile was so pleasant that the spell was broken, never to be reimposed.

He made and still makes the most fiery speeches. In 1923 he even contrived, by calling Sir Frederick Banbury a murderer, to be suspended. But it is no good: those wicked Tories have found him out. They know him now for what he is, no "sea-green incorruptible," but a very likeable, even a lovable fellow. The disillusionment, it is true, has not been all on one side. If the Tories have been disappointed of their revolutionary, Maxton has lost much of his vision of a soulless capitalist, which is to the credit of both parties.

No one is sorrier than are Maxton's opponents when his indifferent health keeps him away from the House. They miss his tragic, enthusiastic face. They miss still more his charming smile; so much so that recently, when he was seriously ill, the Scottish Liberal Members sent him a round robin offering their cordial wishes for his recovery.

A man of rather different type is Buchanan, the member for Gorbals. A pattern-maker by trade, he is thirty-seven years of age, a slender, pleasant-looking person with a friendly countenance and a thatch of light reddish-brown hair. During the War he preached and practised pacifism, and since his election he has been more successful than many of his colleagues in retaining extreme views in the enervating atmosphere of the House of Commons. If Maxton is a little less of a revolutionary than he appears, Buchanan tries to be a little more. His outbreaks,

so far, have been rather of the nature of childish naughtiness than of anything more serious, and give the impression that with years he will learn wisdom if not decorum. In 1923 he was suspended in Maxton's company, and up in Scotland he achieved some small transient notoriety by an attack on the Prince of Wales. On one occasion in the House, taking offence at some comparatively mild remark of Mr. Amery's, he called him, in the choice language of Gorbals, a "swine and a guttersnipe." He found, however, that he had caught a Tartar. Mr. Amery has the pugnacity as well as the stature of a jockey, and, oblivious of the conduct expected of an ex-Minister on the floor of the House, he smote Buchanan fairly and squarely on the jaw. Since that auspicious day the Member for Gorbals seems to have been more careful in his language or at least in his choice of a butt. To describe Buchanan as one of the coming younger men in the Labour movement would be to exaggerate. Although he has brains, he is curiously reluctant to use them; and he is still very much the small boy who rings the front-door bell and then bolts down the street.

A much more considerable person is Dr. Hugh Dalton, an "outsider" whose brains and character have already won him so firm a reputation that he is spoken of as Mr. Philip Snowden's understudy as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the next Labour Government. Born in 1887, he is the son of a Canon of St. George's, Windsor, and is a Cambridge man, and an economist with whom to reckon. During the



War he served with credit and gallantry in the Garrison Artillery, being sent with his battery to the Italian front. A story is told of him in the critical days following the Battle of Caporetto, when our allies had broken as it seemed beyond recovery. An eyewitness reported that he came across three British guns, almost isolated upon the further bank of the Tagliamento, but keeping up a steady fire on the enemy and covering the Italian retreat. At the last moment the young officer in command brought his three monsters back across the river to safety—no small achievement under fire. That officer was Lieutenant Dalton.

He has been called to the Bar, but his real talent is for economics. He is a Doctor of Science, has been Cassell Reader in Economics at the University of London, and has written a book—*Some Aspects of the Inequality of Incomes in Modern Communities*.

He is, needless to say, no extremist, and although he supported a capital levy he is tepid on the subject of nationalization. After three or four unsuccessful contests, he was elected for Camberwell in 1924, and his maiden speech on the Safeguarding of Industries attracted attention in a House full of new and promising members. He is the kind of Labour man with whom Liberals, if the opportunity arose, would be ready to work in a Coalition, and as he has established and yearly improves his popularity with his constituents, he should be immune from the vicissitudes which interrupt so many promising careers.

A rival candidate as Chancellor of the Exchequer

in a future Labour Government is William Graham, the member for Central Edinburgh. He is a Peebles man, a little over forty years old, and was educated at George Heriot's School and Edinburgh University, where, after spending some years as a junior clerk at the War Office, he had a brilliant career. In the Labour Government of 1924 he was Financial Secretary to the Treasury and one of Philip Snowden's most dependable subalterns. On financial matters he still follows his old commander : in other words, he is no more an extremist than is Dalton, and is beginning to be shocked when those rash young men talk about "Socialism in our time."

He is shrewd, sensible, long-headed and pre-eminently safe. In the last generation he would have been catalogued "Lib.-Lab.;" in one still earlier, Radical; and he may yet end his days in the left wing of a reconstituted Liberal Party. In the Labour Movement his clear intellectual superiority to the ruck of his colleagues is a handicap to his advancement. He is neither a pedant nor a bigot, but his personality, pleasant though it is, is scarcely fitted for the rough and tumble of Labour politics.

Yet another type is James Welsh, "the Miners' Poet," who is also only relatively speaking a young man, as he was born in 1880. He is the member for Coatbridge, and the detached and critical observer will find it a little hard to account for his reputation as one of the brighter recruits of Labour. His fame is really literary rather than political, and rests upon a number of poems and a novel, *The Underworld*, which

had a certain vogue in this country and has been translated into three or four languages. One is reminded unkindly of Dr. Johnson's dictum on female orators :

“ Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well ; but you are surprised to find it done at all.”

It is permissible to doubt whether very much would have been heard of James Welsh either as a poet or a novelist had he not been a miner, or as a politician had he not been a poet and a novelist.

Of his verse one specimen will suffice for those who are curious to know whether Scotland has produced a new Robert Burns :

*“ I slaughtered a man, a brother,  
In the wild, wild fight of Mons.  
I see yet his eyes of horror,  
I hear yet his cries and groans.  
We met on the edge of the trenches,  
Where murder, in crimson, rode,  
When swish went my blade in his stomach,  
I'd slaughtered the image of God.”*

Let me hasten to add, in justice to Mr. Welsh, that to the best of my belief his blade has never gone swish into the stomach of anyone—be he a German in the problematical trenches of Mons, or a capitalist in the more probable purlieus of Coatbridge.

It would be unfair to conclude a survey of Young Labour without some mention of those others, less

fortunate or less aspiring, who are not at present in the House of Commons.

Let us begin with Frank Hodges, the "lost leader," once General Secretary of the Miners' Federation, later a Civil Lord of the Admiralty, and recently offered a salaried post on the new Electricity Board. He is a man of forty, educated at Ruskin College, and by turns a miner, a local preacher and a miners' agent. In the Coal Strike of 1921, he was, from the owners' point of view, the villain of the piece; but, although he tried and failed to mobilize the Triple Alliance on that fateful Friday morning, his leadership was much less inept than that of his unbalanced successor, Mr. Cook.

Hodges has mellowed since 1921, and during the last Coal Strike he gave the miners much good advice which they would not take. In return for his trenchant criticism of Mr. Cook, his advocacy of a five years' truce between employers and employed, and his encouragement of non-political unions, he has become in the eyes of the extremists a traitor several degrees worse than J. H. Thomas. To-day he is pursued by a vendetta so unremitting that it is doubtful whether he will ever be allowed to reappear in political life. The Labour Party will be the poorer by the elimination of a man of good sense, attractive personality, and a courage that will not shrink from the lessons of experience, but will face facts, however unpalatable.

By contrast, we have Walter Citrine, an outstanding example of the political Trade Unionist. Born in

1887, at an early age he joined that bumptious and provocative body the Electrical Trades Union, of which he acted as Assistant General Secretary from 1920 to 1923. In 1924 he transferred his services to the Trades Union Council, first as Assistant Secretary, then as Acting Secretary and finally as Secretary. He perforce played a leading part in the General Strike of 1926, when in company with his fellow-members of the Council he discovered that a bluff ceases to be effective when it is called, and particularly when it is called by your own side.

Since those days he seems to have acquired a little wisdom. He recently declared that "A General Strike is in its essence a manifest impossibility;" proceeding to explain to an interested, if slightly incredulous, audience that the little affair of May, 1926, was not a general strike. There was a time when the mention of Mr. Cook moved him to affectionate eulogies; but latterly these two confederates have exchanged their bouquets for missiles of a more formidable character.

Nevertheless, to show that he has not quite passed the age of indiscretion, Citrine set himself not long ago to attack His Majesty's judges, charging them with partiality in industrial suits. "In some cases," he went so far as to assert, "they are biassed politicians."

He has never been a member of the House of Commons, but it would be no surprise if the next election brought him in. He has an expert knowledge of the workings of Trade Unionism, and as he

is shrewd and adaptable he may yet prove very useful to the Labour Movement.

Then there are the two sons of Arthur Henderson (himself the Buggins *par excellence* of the Labour Party) who, like Frank Hodges, have enjoyed a brief Parliamentary experience terminated by defeat at the last election. The elder, W. W., is a journalist. He edits the *Labour Magazine* and does publicity work at the Labour Headquarters in Eccleston Square. His brother Arthur is a Cambridge man and a barrister. As sons of their father they were born, politically, with silver spoons in their mouths, and as they are both competent, intelligent young men, their success in the near future would not be surprising.

Another promising young man who is fortunate in his father is Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's eldest son. He, too, has judgment and ability, and in addition is agreeably free from vanity or egotism. Last August, in the capacity of secretary, he accompanied the unofficial British Delegation to Honolulu, where he worked to the approval of Sir Frederick Sykes and Mr. Lionel Curtis, and made a most favourable impression on the delegates he came across.

Of that other product of Number 10, Downing Street, Oliver Baldwin, little need be said. At elections he emerges from the obscurity of his chicken farm to belittle his father's policy and achievements. He is curiously unaware that were he not his father's son no one would pay the slightest attention to him; and that the favour which is shown him by the Labour Party is an unintended compliment to the

Prime Minister and not a recognition of any special virtue in Oliver Baldwin. He has, however, a sense of humour, and it may be remembered in his favour that during the War he was imprisoned by the Bolsheviki and suffered misadventures sufficient to unbalance a stronger mind than his.

Yet another man, who is genuinely young in years and Labour in sympathy, is Lord De La Warr. He is twenty-seven years old, a convinced Socialist and lately a conscientious objector. He commanded, however, the respect of those who differed from him by serving in the War as an able-seaman in a mine-sweeper, arguing that the hazardous occupation of fishing for mines was a work not of war but of mercy.

Latterly he and his wife have done an agricultural course at Cambridge, and now, I believe, he is managing his large estate on strictly co-operative lines. There is nothing of Egalité about Lord De La Warr. He has the courage and honesty of his convictions, without the intolerance that condemns those of his own class who do not share them. He has lost no friends through his politics, and has earned the esteem to which his sincerity entitles him.

Finally, there is the little group of Labour intellectuals—R. H. Tawney, G. D. H. Cole, H. J. Laski, Fenner Brockway and E. F. Wise.

Of these the most prominent is Tawney, an Old Rugbeian, a Fabian, a pioneer of the Workers' Educational Association and lately a Fellow of Balliol.

In 1914 he joined the Manchester Regiment as a private, went to France and was wounded so severely

on the Somme that he was discharged from the Army. The War left him in such bad health that he has twice been forced to withdraw his candidature for Parliament. He sprang to fame as a member of the Sankey Commission, and is to-day one of the most formidable economists on the Labour side. Like many economists, he is rather a dull speaker, which, with his poor health, may account for his failure so far to obtain a seat in the House. In 1924 he became Reader in Economic History at the University of London.

G. D. H. Cole is another economic pundit of London University. Previously he was a Fellow of Magdalen, and during the War, I believe, he was exempted from military service in order to become "adviser to the Amalgamated Society of Engineers." His particular fad is Guild Socialism, on which he has written and lectured much, and his hobby, which he shares with his wife (an ex-Girton girl), is the writing of detective stories. He is a clever, amusing young man, a better speaker than Tawney, though less convincing as an economist.

H. J. Laski is best known for his little book on Communism, probably the ablest study of the subject from a critical though sympathetic point of view that has yet appeared. Like Cole, he is an Oxford man, but less obviously so. He has been a lecturer at the McGill University in Canada and at Harvard in the United States, where his extreme opinions brought down on him some unfavourable criticism. He is more of the don than of the politician, and his future



is more likely to lie in the London School of Economics, where he is now a professor, than in the House of Commons.

Fenner Brockway is one of those unhappy people who must always be in rebellion against authority. Were he a Russian he would be a Social Democrat and either in captivity or in exile. Were he an Italian he would be nourished upon a diet of which the principal ingredient would be castor oil. Were he a Turk he would probably be an Armenian. He must always be "agin' the Government," whatever that Government may be. During the War he was a militant conscientious objector and chairman of the No Conscription Fellowship. He carried agitation to such lengths that he spent twenty-eight months in prison, and eleven of them in solitary confinement. Really, however, he is the unbalanced type of revolutionary with whom the doctor will deal more fittingly than the magistrate. By profession he is a journalist, with a special interest in foreign affairs. He advocates unlimited Home Rule for the "oppressed nations" of the Empire and supports with passionate conviction almost all the nonsense which the more confused thinkers in the Labour movement have evolved. Like the Duke of Northumberland, he has the simple happy mind that clings without question to certain dogmas. To Fenner Brockway all Tories are men of wrath, and it goes without saying that in any dispute his own country is always in the wrong. He fought Mr. Winston Churchill in the famous Westminster by-election and in 1923 was appointed Secretary of the

Independent Labour Party. It is a pity that a man as likeable and as fanatically sincere as he is should allow his heart so complete a control over his head.

A more probable leader of the future is E. F. Wise. Unlike most of the intellectuals of the party, he comes not from Balliol but from Sidney Sussex, Cambridge. In 1907 he became a clerk in the House of Commons and in 1911 was called to the Bar. He was in the Food Ministry during the War, and in 1919 was a delegate to the Supreme Economic Council. In 1923 he surprised and a little scandalized people by becoming economic adviser on foreign trade to the Central Union of Russian Co-operative Societies and director of the London branch of the Russian Co-operative Organizations. His acceptance of these posts was felt by many to be improper. By virtue of his position in the Board of Trade and of his work on the Supreme Economic Council he had necessarily become possessed of much information which we might not wish to share with the Government of Soviet Russia ; and a Parliamentary assurance that an ex-civil servant who divulged official secrets would be liable to prosecution was insufficient to quell the outcry that arose. Wise hastened to explain that the Co-operative Societies with which he had become connected were not to be confused with the Russian Government ; but his critics, doubtless recalling the efforts of the Soviet leaders to disassociate themselves from the activities of the Third International, were unsatisfied. Certainly, as the representative of "Centrosoyus" Wise has championed the Soviet cause with more consistency

than discretion, and a good many people felt that he should have returned to his spiritual home the other day in the ship which carried off the forlorn little company from Arcos. His ability is undeniable, he has a good presence, a firm grasp of facts, a retentive memory, no small knowledge of economics and a facility in special pleading which evidently comes from long practice. He has a rich, rolling voice, and his speeches, though lucid and packed close with argument, somehow leave on the hearer the impression that there is a kink somewhere in the chain of his logic. At the last election he unsuccessfully contested North Bradford. At the next, he is believed to be standing for East Leicester. He is, I suspect, going to prove himself one of the most useful men in the Labour Party, for he has plenty of brains, is more practical than the intellectual of the Cole or Tawney type, and combines a talent for administration with the more academic knowledge from which it is so often divorced.

This necessarily perfunctory sketch of some of the younger men in the Labour Movement may help us to determine whether and where we may find the raw material of a future Labour Cabinet. Of this at least we may be sure, that we are going to see something of the kind within the next five or six years. To many (and notably to the Duke of Northumberland) the prospect is almost incredible. But there is a toughness about the Labour Movement that has enabled it to survive blunders and faulty leadership which would have doomed any other party to years

of obscurity and opposition : the lost opportunities of 1925 ; the pitiful mishandling of the General Strike ; the fiasco of Labour policy on China ; the spluttering of damp squibs discharged with such bold threats against the Trades Union Bill.

Again, no other party in the world, surely, can present so amazing an amalgam of opposites, of cant and hard common sense, of snobbery and the democratic spirit, of humbug and profound sincerity, of donnish theory and crude nonsense, of vulgar ambition and sickly sentimentality, of the idealist and the careerist. Perhaps the toughness of Labour is just the toughness of a machine, the Robot that has not as yet acquired a soul. It is voluble, noisy, vituperative, but it means very little ; nor is it likely to achieve much until it has reached the fullness of manhood. To-day it is a serious factor in politics through its numbers and its organizations, not through its ideas. It is only dangerous because it is muddle-headed, and rather silly.

## TWO BROTHERS

*The Duke of Northumberland and Lord Eustace  
Percy, M.P.*

ON December 22nd, 1925, the following letter appeared in the *Morning Post* :

SIR,

In the *Morning Post* of December 19th it is stated that Mr. Thomas, in a speech at Derby on December 18th, asserted that I had made a prediction that a Labour Government would be in power in two years' time. This is quite untrue. I have never been guilty of a prediction so idiotic and so insulting to the intelligence of the British public.

(Sgd.) NORTHUMBERLAND.

Alnwick Castle.

Alan Percy, 8th Duke of Northumberland, being considerably nearer fifty than forty, has even less claim than Mr. Ormsby-Gore to be included in this collection. Compromise, however, is a virtue—or a vice—of middle age, and not even the worst enemies of His Grace of Northumberland can say that advancing years have brought him the quality ; or that Age has subdued or even mellowed his ferocious spirit.

In this respect he follows his famous ancestor, Harry Hotspur, who, although he was nearly forty when he fell at the battle of Shrewsbury, is never thought of now as anything but a fiery, hot-blooded youth. For that legend William Shakespeare may be partly to blame, but for the perennial youthfulness of the present duke nothing but his own personality is responsible.

The Percies are a remarkable family, famous through many centuries of English history, and the present generation shows no sign of deterioration in the tradition. Its members are a Peculiar People, quite unlike anyone else, not exactly inhuman, but distinctly non-human. They all possess untiring energy and great powers of concentration when their interest is aroused. The story is told of Lady Victoria Percy, the present Duke's eldest sister and an expert on furs, that when studying her favourite subject she was much too busy to eat at regular times, but had a plate of ham always kept on the hall table so that she could snatch a morsel hastily in passing without interrupting her more pressing activities.

Again, Lady Muriel, the youngest sister, is interested in protoplasms, especially in those which no one else has ever studied. She pays little attention to her clothes, and, like the Duke, is pale and red-haired. She is reported to have said once in sepulchral tones :

"I can't think why people are given solitary confinement as a punishment. It is my idea of absolute bliss."

Nevertheless, this affected distaste for her fellow-creatures does not prevent Lady Muriel, with her strong sense of humour, from being excellent company for them.

Lord Alan Percy, now Duke of Northumberland, was not born the heir to the dukedom, being the fourth son of the late Duke and Duchess. Death, however, played such havoc with this generation of Percies that out of a family of thirteen only seven survive—the present Duke, Lord William Percy, perhaps the most human (by which I do not mean commonplace) of them all, Lord Eustace, the Minister for Education, and four sisters.

Two of Lord Alan's elder brothers died in early youth, and in 1909, the eldest son, Lord Percy, by far the most brilliant and remarkable, and certainly the most charming member of this exceptional family, also died very suddenly in Paris, to the great grief of his friends and relations. Lord Alan then became the heir.

His father, the late Duke, did not play a particularly prominent part in public affairs during the latter period of his life, but was popular among his own people in Northumberland. The Duchess, a daughter of the Duke of Argyll and a sister of Lady Frances Balfour, was a remarkable woman, deeply religious, generous and kind-hearted, but inclined to be caustic of tongue. It is said that when she started giving garden parties at Syon House—the Northumberlands' beautiful palace at Brentford—somebody remarked to her on the excellence of the idea.

She answered: "Yes. You see you can have so many people in the garden whom you would not care to have in the house." In spite of her peculiarities, or perhaps because of them, the Duchess was adored by her children.

A Socialist newspaper, in the course of an attack on the present Duke, excused his shortcomings on the grounds that no doubt he had been surrounded from his youth up by "servile flatterers" and therefore found it difficult to use his brain. It is not likely that the Duke suffered from this particular disadvantage; members of large families—even ducal ones—seldom do, and the Percies with their acute critical sense are less inclined than many to form a Mutual Admiration Society; on the contrary, they would be far more likely effectively to counteract the influence of any outside "servile flatterers," if such appeared.

Nor would the Duke have found them in the Grenadier Guards, which regiment he joined after leaving Eton, and in which he served through the South African War and in the Soudan in 1908.

On the death of his eldest brother, in December, 1909, he succeeded to the courtesy title of Earl Percy. In the following year he married Lady Helen Gordon-Lennox, the Duke of Richmond's youngest daughter, a tall, fair-haired, distinguished-looking girl with a strong character and serene temperament, according well with her husband's fiery aggressive nature, as the happiness of both parties in the marriage proves.

As Lord Percy, the Duke served first with his old



Regiment and later on the Staff at the War Office in the Great War. His record was creditable, though not startling. He earned a mention in dispatches and emerged with his warlike spirit in no way subdued. And in a sense he has been on active service ever since.

In 1918 he succeeded his father, and in the years that followed won a considerable reputation as a speaker and a controversialist. He must be almost the first duke to practise journalism on an impressive scale. He writes articles for the *Patriot*, an obscure but bellicose periodical whose readers are deafened once a week by the buzzing of the bees in the editorial bonnet. He also sends contributions to other papers, mostly in the form of letters trouncing his opponents for being his opponents and his friends for much the same reason, and making it quite clear to both that all who differ from him are "enemy agents in the pay of Russia."

He is more effective on the platform than in print. He has a good voice and delivery, and there is something about that pale face, aggressive nose and mouth, and fierce, intolerant eyes that compels opposition often, but attention always. For the same reason his articles and speeches read better when his portrait appears above them.

He was very much in the public eye during the sessions of the Sankey Coal Commission, when he and Mr. Robert Smillie enjoyed crossing swords, each thinking the other a foeman worthy of his steel, and through it becoming very good friends. When asked whom he liked the best of all the people con-

cerned in the Enquiry, Mr. Smillie is reported to have answered, "Oh, the Duke of Northumberland, of course." The feeling was, I believe, returned. There is a story (I do not vouch for it) that one day, while the negotiations were still going on, the Duke and Mr. Smillie arrived at the same moment and met in the doorway of the Committee Room. The Duke would not enter before Mr. Smillie. Mr. Smillie would not enter before the Duke. Finally they went in together arm-in-arm. If the story is untrue, I apologize to the Duke and Mr. Smillie; if true, only to Mr. Smillie for any harm its revival may do him with the rank and file of his own party, to whom it would appear almost as unsuitable for a Labour leader to link arms with a Duke as for a bishop to play chess with the devil.

Whatever may be the truth of the tale, it fairly illustrates a peculiarity of the Duke of Northumberland. Despite the intemperance of his opinions and his utter lack of sympathy with any point of view other than his own, he has the gift of making private friends of his public enemies. It seems that an uncompromising fighting spirit wins popularity, or at least respect. The Duke never stoops to pacify an opponent. There is no nonsense about him. He says what he thinks with all the emphasis that he feels. He has the courage of the fanatic and is as immovable as a slab of his own Northumbrian granite. Therefore his opponents have for him a feeling almost akin to affection.

In private life he can be both agreeable and interesting. He has plenty of vitality and humour,

and his enthusiasm, when temporarily divorced from politics, is exhilarating. He is a good sportsman and a good landlord; and even those who regard large estates as a danger and an anomaly have never accused him of shirking his responsibilities to his neighbours and tenants. He spends much of his time at Alnwick, the Italian palazzo into which the baronial castle of the Percies was transformed in the year 1850.

Those who know and respect the Duke as a landlord and a country gentleman are inclined to deplore his more public activities, and especially his epistolary persistence. His chosen organ, apart from the *Patriot*, is of course the *Morning Post*, of which he is now a part proprietor, and his letters are usually of the kind that the wise often write, but only the unwise ever send off. They abound in the *clichés* of invective; so that after you have read one, each subsequent letter carries a familiar echo. "The public does not know the truth about the present crisis." "Such-and-such a move on the part of the Labour Party (or the Trades Unions or the Government or the Liberals or almost anybody) has inspired all decent law-abiding citizens with loathing and contempt." "The working-man must be as sick of it as is every other right-thinking person (or right-minded body of men)." In this style and in almost precisely this language he has embraced the cause of the Irish Loyalists, advocated a Parliamentary inquiry into the Lloyd-George Political Fund, denounced the sale of honours, and taunted the Conservative Cabinet with timidity (although at the same time he declares

that no other government is tolerable or possible at present). "Common sense," he once remarked, "is the heritage of all men, however humble or unlearned." Though neither humble nor unlearned, he has yet to come into his heritage.

During the Coal Strike of 1926 the Duke became involved in a spirited correspondence with a clergyman of the name of Lloyd-Evans in the columns of the *Daily Herald*. This gentleman had made a personal attack on him, declaring himself in favour of the confiscation of mining royalties without compensation, and an enemy of "the system of privileges and prerogatives by a class for a class who are descendants of Norman freebooters," etc. This is the kind of fly to which the Duke infallibly rises. Snatching up his pen, he rushed into battle with the rash cleric. Freebooters indeed! And if they were, had they not endowed the Church? And if they had, were not the clergy receivers of stolen goods, which they had no intention of giving up? "You denounce the present system; the Church is part and parcel of it, and you are making a very good thing out of it. You condemn feudalism; the Church is a relic of feudalism. You condemn privileges, and are yourself of a privileged caste. You condemn prerogatives, and the Church bristles with them."

So heated grew the exchange of compliments, that a public debate was suggested. The Northumbrians, who love a sporting event, viewed the project with favour, but the Duke declined. Possibly he awoke to a belated sense of the ducal dignity;

and perhaps both parties, on reflection, felt, like the rival editors of the *Eatanswill Gazette* and the *Eatanswill Independent*, that they could do it much better in print.

The correspondence was characteristic of the Duke's controversial methods. He never allows himself to be discouraged by a tactical disadvantage that would daunt the ordinary man. He is, as is well-known, one of the largest royalty owners in England. Most people in such a position would feel themselves disqualified from taking an active part in a dispute on the rights and wrongs of coal royalties : they would prefer to leave their defence to others. Not so the Duke. He must be his own champion ; he must defend not merely the economics but even the ethics of his position ; and no false delicacy will deter him from identifying his royalties with the common weal, or from calling his critics knaves or fools, or very possibly both.

There is nothing at which he loves so well to tilt as a good windmill ; and fortunately for his happiness the landscape is well dotted with them. He is always ready to break a lance with the champions of the League of Nations, and sometimes it is the enemy who is unhorsed. I recall an occasion when he took part in one of a series of " Lectures and Counter-lectures " held at the London School of Economics in aid of the King Edward VII. Hospital Fund. The subject for debate was, " Will the Ape and the Tiger Ever Die ? "—in other words, " Is the League of Nations any Good ? " His antagonist was Mr.

Oswald Mosley, not yet, it is true, "an avowed enemy agent," but already under the suspicions of a Patriot as "a traitor in the camp."

The Duke spoke first. He attacked the League—its aims, objects, achievements and prospects—with all his wonted vigour and in his own way, which of course is no one else's way. Others might damn with faint praise, with doubts and fears and regrets that the League was a conception too lofty for our frail human nature. The Duke would have nothing to do with such paltry stuff. His fear was not that the League might fail, but that it might succeed. Can the fighting instinct of man be curbed? "Of course it can," the Duke replied. "It's as easy as falling off a log—and as silly." Had not the Romans curbed theirs so effectively that their civilization fell an easy prey to the invading hordes of barbarians? We, too, in face of many warnings had tried to curb our fighting spirit, and were in consequence hopelessly unprepared for the Great War. The whole of history is strewn with the wreckage of ancient races, foundered on this same rock, he exclaimed, or words to that effect. He wound up by telling us that the fault of the English was that "they will try to persuade themselves that an ape is not an ape, nor a tiger a tiger."

Such was his tremendous sincerity that, in spite of ourselves, we were impressed—as though the tiger had himself appeared on the platform to plead against extinction. His Grace, perhaps, was not quite a tiger, but he had at least the appearance and the ferocity of a large and articulate ferret.

We awaited the uprising of Mr. Mosley with hope in our hearts. Surely he would restore our shaken faith, replace on its pedestal our dinted idol. But our hope was in vain, and we knew it almost from the moment when he declared that he was "honest to the point of simplicity." Scarcely a sentence rang true, and after the primitive, fiery stuff with which the Duke had served us, Mr. Mosley's elaborate oratory was as insipid as a glass of weak lemonade. "Man," he perorated, "was an immortal child of evolution . . . illuminated by reflected radiance of ultimate beauty and ineffable peace." The rhetoric of it wilted almost before it flowered.

That evening was a triumph after the Duke's heart. He had talked his adversary off the platform. He had carried with him an unwilling audience, fully two-thirds of whom had begun the evening in sympathy with Mr. Mosley. He had publicly discomfited a budding Egalité. He had gone hunting the League—that large, flabby, lop-eared rabbit—and his sharp little teeth had drawn blood.

We live in an age when levelling is all the fashion, when a tribe of historians (such as Mr. Guedalla) is for ever proving to us that history contains neither heroes nor villains, but just ordinary men, a little better or a little worse, a little more or a little less stupid, a trifle more or a trifle less fortunate than their fellows. It is refreshing to find a man with the old assurance of the Victorians, who can feel as Lord Macaulay wrote when he differed from Charles Lamb on a point of literary criticism: "We own that we

are unable to understand how this question can be answered in any way but one." To the Duke no question can be answered in any way but one ; to the Duke a man is either honest or a scoundrel, and there's an end on't ; to the Duke black is black, and white is white, and there is no such colour as grey. To "this quaint peer"—"the only duke prominent in politics," as the *Daily Herald* describes him, the times are sadly out of joint, but that, he holds, is no reason why he should truckle to them. As the old tag has it, "*Victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni*." Our heads may approve the wisdom of the gods, but our hearts can scarcely refrain from a sneaking sympathy with the champion of lost causes.

Lord Eustace, President of the Board of Education and youngest surviving brother of the duke, is a man of very different type, although he too is every inch a Percy. He has his full share of the family perversity, a better brain than his brother but less vitality. He is no Hotspur, and his speeches and rare letters to the papers, if purer in style, are less entertaining in substance. The fairies who attended his christening—if we can imagine such creatures of fancy hovering over the cradle of an infant Percy—bestowed upon him many gifts : a fine intellect, high principle, ability, integrity, good temper and good looks ; but, capriciously, they withheld from him the qualities—quite as valuable to a mortal—of humour, imagination and personal magnetism.

His voice, like his sister Muriel's, is deep and powerful ; but its tone is harsh and unpleasing, and without



adding to the impressiveness of his delivery is in strong contrast with his thin, pale face and well-cut, refined features. He loves to argue for argument's sake, and whatever his real opinion may be, must always take the opposite view to the other person's. Time after time he will twist, shuffle, fence with words and shift his ground rather than admit agreement on the smallest detail. This, it will be observed, is a peculiarity which he shares with Miss Susan Lawrence, and I am always in hopes of one day witnessing a verbal encounter between the two. They are both like the superseded lover in one of Wycherley's plays, of whom the faithless heroine says: "His real mistress is his own opinion, and he abandons it as soon as it becomes another man's."

In the course of argument Lord Eustace seldom shows annoyance or gives any indication of strong feeling. Only once have I heard him become heated—even a little rude—and on that occasion the other party was Mr. Lionel Curtis. I understand that he has the temerity to administer occasional snubs to his Under-Secretary, the Duchess of Atholl, but, as a rule, he is cold-blooded in debate and the more exasperating in consequence.

Nevertheless, he likes criticism no more, and his own way no less, than other men. I have often imagined that when he drafted the notorious Circular 1358 (which wrecked his own scheme) he purposely did not consult any of the permanent officials of the Board of Education for fear that, willy-nilly, he might find himself agreeing with them.

After a brilliant career at Oxford, Lord Eustace passed into the Diplomatic Service, where he soon came to be regarded as one of the cleverest of the younger men. For some years he was *attaché* at Washington. The Americans are always quick to recognize and to appreciate anyone who approximates to their curious conception of a typical Englishman, and Lord Eustace, who fits the part well, enjoyed considerable success and social popularity. He was liked because he was so different. He looked the English aristocrat to perfection—particularly in the eyes of those whose acquaintance with the English aristocracy was limited; while his subtle brain and cold, analytical mind—phenomena rare in American society—were quite in keeping with his distinguished appearance. Lord Eustace, for his part, returned the liking in full measure. He came back full of praise for Americans and American life; nor would he even admit the existence of the youthful crudity which is so often an Englishman's most forcible impression of the United States. Perhaps this was merely another example of his habit of disagreement.

In 1918 Lord Eustace abandoned his career in the Foreign Office and entered political life. In the same year he married Miss Stella Drummond, General Drummond's daughter, a tall, willowy, sensitive, rather interesting and very attractive woman.

In 1919, following the death of Sir Mark Sykes, he stood as Conservative candidate for Central Hull, but was defeated by Lt.-Commander Kenworthy. However, a by-election at Hastings soon gave him a second

chance : he won by a comfortable majority and has held the seat through three subsequent elections.

In the House he showed himself an effective debater, and his rise in office has been rapid. He had a few months at the Board of Education, a few months more at the Ministry of Health ; and in 1924, when Lord Irwin (then Mr. Edward Wood) was moved to the Board of Agriculture, he took his place at the Education Office in Mr. Baldwin's second Cabinet.

It is neither fair nor easy to judge a Minister's work while he is still doing it. Lord Eustace has made more than one glaring mistake while he has been in office, and has drawn upon himself harsh criticism, not only from his political opponents, but also from many on his own side. It is true that he has had a difficult task, between those who clamour for the full application and extension of Mr. Fisher's scheme and those who demand economy at all costs. It may be that at such a time no Minister of Education can achieve success, but very few people seem to have confidence in Lord Eustace's wisdom or judgment. He has no instinct for affairs. He will do the right thing, but at the wrong time and in the wrong way. There was, for example, the fiasco of Circular 1358. In June, 1927, again, he proposed raising the age at which children should leave school to fifteen ; and there was at once a general outcry at the extra cost of £3,000,000 annually which the change would involve. Yet were he to attempt no reform he would be abused with equal violence from other quarters, and his enemies would christen

him with more justification than at present Lord "Useless" Percy.

He is liked and admired by his permanent officials. Despite that curious non-human strain in him which is peculiar to the Percies, he is not unsociable, nor does he lack sympathy with his fellow-creatures. He enjoys entertaining and being entertained, and, unlike Lady Astor in every other respect, he shares her love (though not her talent) for dressing up and acting in charades. Although he has little power of reading the thoughts and feelings of others, or of judging the effect upon them of his words and actions, he is a loyal and generous friend. As a companion he is less satisfactory. There is something curiously impersonal about his conversational manner, so that he will talk to you as though you were a lay figure. He will wear the same serious and intense air and use words of the same number of syllables whether he is addressing his two-year-old daughter or outlining educational policy to his colleagues and subordinates.

More level-headed and moderate than his brother, he is equally punctilious in the discharge of his public duties. On the other hand, he has none of the Duke's gift of winning the affection of political opponents. The Labour Party, both in the House and outside, regard him with peculiar aversion. They can understand and even respect the impetuous ducal diatribes; but they can neither understand nor forgive the frigid, intellectual combativeness of Lord Eustace, particularly as behind it they are unable to detect any depth of feeling or conviction.

The comparison is not altogether fair to Lord Eustace. There is a difference in circumstances as well as in temperament. Lord Eustace began his career as a Civil Servant, and has never quite divested himself of the official outlook or the official reticence. It follows that even if he had the time he has too much sense of responsibility to venture like his brother into debates on abstract subjects or into printed warfare with Socialist clergymen.

But if we may not make comparisons, let us at least suggest an exchange. Let Lord Eustace present the Duke with a little of his restraint, his intellect and his sense of proportion; and let the Duke endow his younger brother with some measure of his ardour, his humour, his downrightness, even of his ferocity. A mixture often makes strange stuff, and of this particular alchemy we can only predict that the result would still leave—two Percies.

JOHN BUCHAN, M.P.

Not very long ago, through no fault of my own, I fell among "literary" folk. They were a small and eminent company, and they were all talking at once. Suddenly, above the clamour, a question rang out like a bugle call—"Who is our greatest living novelist?" The "literary" gentlemen leapt joyously to battle, and the conversation crackled into volleys of names and claims, panegyrics, faint praises and downright damns. Was it C. E. Montague? or Percy Lubbock? or Mottram? or James Joyce? or Aldous Huxley? During a momentary lull in the bombardment someone turned to me and remarked: "You've been very silent" (I had indeed!); "whom would you select?"

I answered timidly: "Well, what about John Buchan?"

The suggestion was not well received. The others were not exactly angry, anger being altogether too Ethel M. Dell-ish an emotion for men of culture and discernment. But they were distressed. They had not, I gathered, been so pained since that dreadful day when the author of *Spanish Farm*—*Spanish Farm*!—broke breezily into the offices of Messrs. Chatto and

Windus, and invited one of the more delicate-minded of the directors to "come outside and have a spot of something."

I had gone a little too far. They would allow me Galsworthy, if I insisted, or Arnold Bennett, or W. B. Maxwell. But John Buchan! *John Buchan!!* It could not be.

For my part, I love John Buchan. I love him, firstly, because the highbrows hate him, which by itself is a good and adequate reason; and secondly, because he attempts neither to purify my literary taste nor to corrupt my morals, but merely to thrill me pleasantly for an hour or so; and thirdly—well, just for being John Buchan.

Most of us are tempted at times to try to visualize our favourite writers. We construct detailed, though quite unauthorized, pictures in our minds of the personal appearance of, say, Rudyard Kipling or Sir James Barrie or H. G. Wells, nor are we discouraged by the thought that there is an unpleasant moment waiting for us when for the first time we meet the great man in the flesh. Perhaps it is a sign of the essential niceness of human nature that our imaginary picture is generally so much more attractive than the reality; that we deprive Mr. Kipling of his spectacles and give him a lantern jaw and grizzled hair and an empire-builder's chin; while the creator of Peter Pan becomes a little impish, elusive figure from another world, a very etherealized conception of his own Maconochie.

John Buchan is one of the few whose personal

appearance reaches one's expectations. When I was first introduced to him, I said to myself at once, "But of course, that *is* John Buchan." Indeed, I believe that anyone who had never met him, but had read his books, would pick him out of a roomful of people. There is almost the familiarity of old acquaintance about that gay and gallant bearing. You somehow expected those quick movements, that sparkle in the blue eyes, that ready wit dropping from the tip of the tongue, that ghost of a Scots accent, the charm, the friendliness—even the deep scar on his forehead which, though really the result of an accident in childhood, seems to hint at a hair-raising past. This, you feel, is how the great Richard Hannay himself must have looked; this is the man to give Salute to Adventurers. You may be unambitious to go tiger-hunting with anyone; but you feel that if ever a tiger should go hunting you, you would extract some small comfort from an unfortunate predicament if you knew that John Buchan was simultaneously hunting the tiger.

These, of course, are just first impressions; that they are somewhere near the mark a host of witnesses will testify. There are few men in England with so wide a circle, not of acquaintances, but of friends, as John Buchan. In fact, friendship with him is a hobby. He must know everybody, be on the best of terms with everybody, call everybody by his or her Christian name. He may have only met you twice, he may not get your Christian name quite right; but whether you are a gillie or a duchess or an American traveller, you are Donald or Dorothy or Hiram and his very



good friend. This is not snobbery, as I have heard suggested ; for while the snob might enjoy calling a duke " Fred," he would scarcely derive equal pleasure from addressing the duke's third footman as " Bill."

Moreover, to do John Buchan justice, neither Fred the duke nor Bill the footman will be anything but gratified by his familiar address. For he has the great man's art of persuading you, whoever you may be, that you are the very person of all others whose society he wants. He is delightful company ; he can talk well on almost any subject under the sun ; he has a fund of entertaining stories, of which the best are those he tells in his own Lowland Doric ; and he is particularly nice and helpful if you are young and quite unimportant.

There is flattery for you, too, in the thought that he is an exceedingly busy man. (Why is it that it is only the really busy people who always have time to burn ?) He is a partner in Nelson, the publishing firm ; he was, until recently, vice-chairman of Reuter's News Agency ; and, as if his other occupations were insufficient to fill his time, he has now become a Member of Parliament.

He aspires, perhaps a little self-consciously, to be all things to all men. Down in Oxfordshire he is a plain, bluff country gentleman, with a couple of hunters in his stable and a knowing eye for the state of the crops. When he is taking the chair at a University dinner, he is almost an undergraduate among undergraduates, overflowing with wit and good fellowship. He will roar as well as any lion at a

literary gathering, and talk simple good sense at a public meeting.

I had nearly forgotten to add that he writes books. The plural number should be emphasized, for his output is as impressive as his versatility. In 1923 he produced *The Last Secrets* and *Midwinter*; in 1924 appeared a full-dress life of Lord Minto, an anthology of Scots poetry, a little book on Walter Scott, and *The Three Hostages*; in 1925 a *History of the Royal Scots*, another little book on Walter Scott, and *John Macnab*; and in 1926 *The Dancing Floor, Homilies and Recreations*, and, in collaboration, a war history of the Fifteenth (Scottish) Division.

Consider the life he leads. He lives at Elsfield, a few miles out of Oxford. (If you want to know what his home is like you should read *The Path of the King*, in which he describes it pretty faithfully.) On most days of the week he is boarding the London train while the majority of us are still eating our breakfasts. After his day's work in London, he catches another train which enables him to reach Elsfield in time for dinner. And he never writes after dinner. Thanks to his early rising, it is true, he steals an hour before breakfast, a time of day when the ordinary man feels singularly disinclined for literary activities. Apart from this, there are week-ends, frequently spent in the houses of his friends, and odd moments in odd places, when a chapter or two may be dashed off.

It is surprising to find in his books so few traces of the peculiar conditions under which he writes them. Sometimes, perhaps, the characters disappear, just as

you are beginning to feel interested, and you wonder whether the author has forgotten that they existed. And occasionally, when they reappear, they do not seem to be quite the same people. You feel that John Buchan, scribbling away at Chapter XVII. in a railway carriage between Oxford and London, must have failed to recall exactly what he jotted down in Chapter II., three week-ends back, when he was sitting in a corner of his host's billiard-room and the rest of the party was playing billiard fives. But these are rare lapses.

For an author to be capable of output on an American scale is valuable : to have had experience and to know how to use it is almost more valuable. John Buchan has had the advantage of, and has drawn full measure from, a varied life. As a boy he was bred in Peeblesshire, whence he brought the tang of the moors that haunts his early novels and an abiding love of the Lowland country. He went to Oxford, where he gathered in the Stanhope, the Newdigate, a first in "Greats," the Presidency of the Union—and that indefinable quality in his writing that suggests an Oxford man. He went to South Africa as private secretary to Lord Milner, and caught the infection of Empire-building in Lord Milner's Kindergarten. (*The Lodge in the Wilderness* is good Round Table doctrine, before the Round Table was ; but *Prester John* is the finer book.)

On his return to Scotland he hovered uncertainly between history, politics and literature. He wrote an admirable life of Montrose, a congenial subject for the

unrepentant romantic. He fought his native seat for the Tory party and very nearly dished the local Whigs. He gave us one or two more historical novels.

When the Great War came he found a new vocation and a larger public. The vocation was the writing of spy stories, and the public consisted of that comprehensive section of the population of Great Britain which saw Germans as ubiquitously and irrelevantly as a dipsomaniac sees snakes. *The Thirty-nine Steps*, which the author wrote from his sick bed, was one of the first and best tales of its kind, and was followed by an even better sequel, *Greenmantle*.

These, however, were mere relaxations. He was writing his history of the War, a history that was written almost as soon as it was made. But even this was not his staple industry. Giving his services to the Government, he joined the Intelligence and was sent to G.H.Q. in France. Later he came home to be a kind of information bureau for distressed Cabinet Ministers. Hard-headed business men, who had never had the handicap of a liberal education and who suddenly found themselves directing the affairs of the nation, turned to him for enlightenment. There is a story of one of Mr. Lloyd George's private secretaries who was told to procure (presumably for peroration purposes) a volume of Disraeli's speeches. He applied to some departmental library, and presently the book was delivered at Number 10, Downing Street. Five minutes later an angry secretary rang up a bewildered librarian. He had asked for Disraeli's speeches, and had been sent Lord Beaconsfield's!

That was the kind of situation with which John Buchan dealt quite admirably during those War years.

It is true that to this encyclopædic period of instructing people how to pronounce Przemyśl and telling them who won the battle of Waterloo, and what was the precise relationship, if any, between the Czechs and the Tchecha belongs the one failure in an otherwise uniformly successful career. He actually tried, so it has been suggested, to teach Mr. Lloyd George a little elementary English history.

*“The man recovered from the bite,  
The dog it was that died.”*

At any rate, after the War, and indeed during it, John Buchan was a very sick man. He established himself at Elsfield, and, when the doctors were kind, continued to write. He dashed off the remainder of his history of the War, took a regimental history or two in his stride, and gave us at intervals of three or four months either a novel or a book of adventure. That brings him up to date, to the present era of directorships, vice-chairmanships, committees, social activities, and literary excursions in railway carriages. It will be observed that the invalid made a pretty good recovery.

He has his public. He has taught them—perhaps a little too well—what to expect from him. He must go on climbing the Thirty-nine Steps; and if the summit is not Parnassus, it is at least a prominent place in the shelves of the Circulating Libraries. But

he must not play tricks with his readers. *Midwinter* was an awful warning. How many took it up in the hope of finding in its pages some further adventure of the redoubtable Richard Hannay ; and laid it down in wrath on discovering that they had been cozened into reading an historical novel ! The public is shy of historical novels, and he who aspires to write best-sellers must give the public what it wants, not just what he thinks is good for it.

Nor is this so cynical a confession as it sounds, for, after all, what is it that makes a best-seller ? Foremost, there is the vital quality of sincerity. The author must believe what he writes. Many a clever young man has sat down with his tongue in his cheek to try to write a book like *The Rosary*. He has always failed. The public, so dull and undiscerning, will always detect a fraud of this kind.

Then the characters in a best-seller, though defying reality, must also be—its readers. The city clerk at three pounds a week and the typist with artificial silk stockings must be able to follow the enthralling adventures of hero and heroine and to exclaim, “ There, with God’s grace, go I ! ”

And then we—the characters in this same best-seller—must have interesting experiences. Life is often a drab affair, and the drabber it is, the more we crave for romance and excitement. If the author is merely going to describe our humdrum everyday existence, we have very little use for him. He must give us adventure. And he must persuade us that it is the kind of adventure we might have. He should

start us off in some place with which we are perfectly familiar, Piccadilly or Oxford Street, our club or our villa in Streatham. Then let the fun begin. He can carry us to Central Asia and back again ; he can make us break the bank at Monte Carlo, or fight desperate battles with masked Touaregs, or (if our sex is female) be abducted by sheikhs or Mohmands or strong silent men from the woolly West. We are with him to the last rapturous line.

Therein is the whole art of John Buchan. His tongue is never in his cheek. He writes of just those adventures which would afford him the keenest personal enjoyment, and, strange to say, we find, after reading a few pages, that they would suit us very well too. His heroes behave much as we in like circumstances would wish to behave. This effect is enhanced by his autobiographical style. As we read we feel that he *is* David Crawford, blundering towards the Berg with Prester John's rubies round his neck ; that he *is* Richard Hannay, following, through incredible perils, the trail of Greenmantle ; that he *is* in turn each component person of the trinity of John Macnab. (He will tell you that he goes off to Scotland every August as a respectable citizen, but now I have my suspicions.)

He has convinced himself ; therefore he convinces us. He has described himself ; in so doing, we ordinary folk like to feel that he has described us.

The beginnings of most, if not all, of his later novels are set in thoroughly prosaic surroundings : a small Lowland town, an Oxfordshire village, Pall Mall—

places that come within our own immediate experience. So we are caught up into the tale. We may end in Anatolia or Zululand or anywhere else, but he never leaves us behind or gives us an uncomfortable feeling of being out of place. He takes us among such odd people too. It is, I think, the sheer incongruity of his characters, as well as of their surroundings, that makes the game. He collects a few Bolsheviks, Boy Scouts and staid Glasgow citizens, dumps them down on the West Coast of Scotland, and—things happen. He gets together a back-veld Boer, an adventure-seeking Englishman and a dyspeptic American millionaire, and they disorganize a perfectly good battle in the neighbourhood of Erzerum.

But, cry the critics, this is all wrong. It is impossible; it is not life; it is a dream, a nightmare. Well, what of that? It gives us the escape from life's drabness for which we ask, and for which we are profoundly grateful to the author. Remember, when you have read one of John Buchan's books, you must on no account sit down to analyse it. You must keep unannealed the hot impression of the moment. Introspection is the parent of disillusion, the godfather of the highbrow, and a miserable old spoil-sport.

Sometimes, I admit, the sternly uncritical part is hard to play. There is, for instance, that entirely illegitimate use of the coincidence, which gets him (and his hero) out of many a tight corner. I sometimes wonder how John Buchan would shape in one of his own adventures, deprived, as alas! he would be, of the aid of one of his own coincidences. I can



see him sitting in a club in Pall Mall one hot August evening, listening while some weather-beaten friend, just returned from the ends of the earth, unfolds to him the story of a mysterious conspiracy, centred, let us say, in Timbuctoo. John goes out into the night, and just as he is about to turn into St. James's Street, a man passes him. There is something about him which suggests to John complicity in the plot just disclosed—a scar on his left cheekbone, or a mumbled “Timbuctoo” on his lips. The stranger hails a taxi; so does John. The stranger drives rapidly north, to Euston or King's Cross; so does John. The stranger boards the Scotch Express; so does John. Late in the afternoon of the next day, the train draws in to a small station in the Highlands. The stranger alights and takes to the moors, and John, hungry and unshaven, but with the light of pursuit still burning in his eyes, follows him. The climax comes in the heart of a deer forest. John, who has been skilfully stalking his quarry, steals up behind him, hurls himself upon him, and bears him heavily to the ground. But when the stranger has recovered his breath and excavated his nose from a foot of heather, he hastens to demonstrate, beyond the possibility of doubt, that he is a man of blameless character and irreproachable past; that he received an honourable scar on his left cheek during the late war, or that what he really said was not “Timbuctoo” but a sneeze; and that he is returning quite reputably to his wife and children in the lodge near by.

Nevertheless, this is not how best-sellers are written.

Sometimes, too, I confess I have my misgivings, ungracious though they must appear. I find myself speculating whether, if John Buchan were to curtail a few of his extraneous activities and confine himself to one book a year, he might not give us another *Salute to Adventurers*, and whether that might not be worth a round dozen of *John Macnab* or *The Three Hostages*. I suspect that John Buchan himself shares my doubts; that his latest novel, *Witchwood*, is yet another lingering look behind; and that, consulting his own tastes, he would forswear Richard Hannay and all his clan, and keep company for the future with the Covenanters of his own Lowland country. That, however, is probably only a pleasant thought with which to toy in moments of sentiment. There are not many men who can deliberately turn their backs on the crowd, to write what they themselves wish to write and not what the larger part of their public wishes to read. Nor, I think, is John Buchan such a man. There was a time when men talked about the mantle of Stevenson. When they talk of it to-day they do not endow John Buchan with it; for, rightly or wrongly, he has chosen another garb.

Rightly or wrongly, but probably rightly. In literature men must be trusted ultimately to find their own height, or depth; and it is fairer to judge them by the measure they have set themselves than by some artificial standard they have never dreamed of compassing. John Buchan has made his choice, and to grumble at it would be folly as well as ingratitude.

Yet it would be rash to assume finality where so versatile a person is concerned. Since, the other day, the Scottish Universities sent him to Parliament, a new prospect has opened. I have an idea that at heart John Buchan has always been a man of politics rather than a man of letters. At Oxford he professed Jacobitism in a club which boasted a real chaplain in real knee-breeches. In South Africa he went to school with Lord Milner's young men. Before the War, as I have mentioned, he vainly sought to wean Peebles from its traditional Whiggery. Of recent years he has devoted much time and trouble to mysterious committees at the Conservative Central Office, and has had a lot to do with the Party's educational schemes. It is no great transformation for a literary man who dabbles in politics to become a politician who dabbles in literature.

His opinions are those of the enlightened country gentleman, the part which he plays so gracefully in his Oxfordshire home. He is robust, sensible, and just a little feudal in his outlook. Yet I fancy that the Young Conservatives, if they are wise, will find in him an ally, for no man is more conscious than he of the futility of mere reaction, or less likely to wield a spade for the entrenchment of vested interests. He is a genuine Tory, enriching his politics with not a little of the romance that he finds in history. It was Burke who once said that a man who never looks back to his ancestors will never look forward to posterity; and no one can charge John Buchan with either omission.

At present we can only conjecture how he will react to the House of Commons, or the House of Commons to him. Parliament is a school where the new boy is accepted on his merits and not on any reputation he may bring with him. At least John Buchan has made a good start, for his speech in the debate on the proposed reform of the House of Lords was one of the events of the session.

How he will contrive to combine a Parliamentary career with all his other activities is another problem that only time can solve. It may well be that he will find the task too severe for his health, if not for his abundant energy, and that, once again, he will be faced with a choice. Of the tug-of-war, if and when it comes, we may safely prophesy that if politics be the winner literature will be a clear loser.

## TWO SAILORS

*Commander Sir E. Hilton Young, M.P., and  
Lt.-Commander J. M. Kenworthy, M.P.*

I CANNOT recall who it was who stated that a man who had not been a Socialist before he was twenty-five had no heart, and who was one after that age had no head. The generalization, although as inaccurate as are most generalizations, is a little more reliable in these days than Gilbert's famous classification in *Iolanthe*. A change in politics is more reputable and popular than it was twenty-five years ago, when the gentleman who altered his opinions must expect for several years thereafter to be publicly assailed with such polite epithets as "rat" and "turncoat." Perhaps Mr. Winston Churchill, Tory—Liberal—Coalitionist—National Liberal—Independent—Constitutionalist—Tory, set a new fashion; more probably the confusion of parties in the Great War is responsible for the growing leniency with which the vice of political inconstancy is regarded.

Neither Hilton Young nor Kenworthy, to the best of my belief, started life as a Socialist; but they were both Liberals, and Hilton Young at least was as a

young man a very extreme Liberal. They have both served in the Navy, Kenworthy as a professional sailor and Hilton Young in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve ; they both entered Parliament after the War as Liberals ; and they have both comparatively lately shifted their allegiance.

At this point their ways have diverged. Hilton Young turned to the right, Kenworthy to the left, and to-day between these erstwhile allies there is a great gulf fixed.

Sir Edward is one of those impossible people who do everything well. No matter how apparently inappropriate the job he undertakes, he will carry it out with an easy competence which is the despair of ordinary folk. Of this his career, as successful as it has been varied, is the proof. After an education at Eton and Cambridge, he was called to the Bar, and practised in the King's Bench Division and on the Oxford circuit. No doubt, had he chosen, he could have had a brilliant forensic career, but his interests lured him on to other paths. Figures and the mysteries of finance—dry and difficult subjects to most people—had for long attracted him, and in 1910, when he was only thirty, after unsuccessfully contesting two constituencies as a Liberal, he became Financial Editor of the *Morning Post*. (This was in the days when it was almost a rule that the leading positions on Conservative newspapers should be held by Liberals, and on Liberal newspapers by Conservatives.)

Then came the War. We obtain some insight into

the quality of Hilton Young's Liberalism when we remember that at first he was vehemently opposed to British participation. His pacifism, however, was short-lived. He was not a man who could sit idly at home while his contemporaries protected him, and about the middle of August he found himself, rather unexpectedly, a Lieutenant in the R.N.V.R., deciphering and decoding telegrams on board the *Cyclops*, depot ship to the Grand Fleet at Scapa Flow.

This was the beginning of a war experience as adventurous and kaleidoscopic as any on record. It was not long before Lieutenant Young began to find his occupation depressing. Day after day the Grand Fleet would put to sea, and day after day he remained behind. He would watch those great hulls slip out of the anchorage, and he would go back to his telegrams with vague discontent in his heart. "Tomorrow, one thought, might be the great day," he wrote; "it would be awful to be there, but on the whole it would be more awful not to be there now that one had come so close. Could one perhaps get taken to sea in a real ship in some capacity or other, if only for a single trip?"

One could, and, if one was a young man of ability and persistence, one was. The Rear-Admiral's secretary, who was Hilton Young's immediate chief, pulled some necessary wires, and one fine evening Young, to his own intense surprise, stepped on the quarter-deck of the *Iron Duke*, the Commander-in-Chief's flagship, as a member of her great company. After

an interval in which his chief care was to keep out of everyone's way, he was attached to the First Lieutenant for instruction in the duties of an executive officer in the Royal Navy.

He was in the *Iron Duke* for a whole year, and when the first excitement of going to sea in a "real ship" was over he found the long days and nights of watches and routine unbearably tedious. If only the German *Hoch See Flotte* would come out! But through 1915 hope grew faint, and the boredom, monotony and drab discomfort of the life loomed large.

Hilton Young was becoming restless again when—by what subtle management (if any) I know not—he was given a new and very different appointment, being attached to the staff of the British Naval Mission with the Serbian Army on the Danube. This was in the autumn of 1915. The Austrian drive to the South followed, and in his book *By Sea and Land* Hilton Young gave a simple but vivid picture of the horrors of the great retreat, when the Serbian army, mingled with the civil population, streamed south and west through Albania, beset by starvation, disease and the guns of the enemy.

The Naval Mission made good its escape to Brindisi and thence back to England. Hilton Young was next appointed to the *Centaur*, a light cruiser in which he found life less monotonous and more responsible than it had been in the *Iron Duke*. There were frequent meetings with enemy destroyers; there was, moreover, one terrible occasion when Lieutenant Hilton



Young allowed the ship's chronometers, which were in his charge, to run down, an offence which gave the delinquent some anxious hours. Fortunately the crime was never detected. So he spent some not unhappy months. He would put to sea in the small hours, perhaps encounter and engage some enemy craft, and return to play tennis at the club or attend tea-parties at Dovercourt.

This curious double life lasted for about a year, when he was again moved, this time to the Western Front, where, under the command of his old chief in Serbia, Commander Kerr, he served with a group of big naval guns. With these he remained until February, 1918, when all naval ranks and ratings were withdrawn by the Admiralty. For his work in this period he was awarded the D.S.C. and the Croix de Guerre.

His next job was more peaceful, and in consequence more irksome. He was given an aged gun mounted on a train at a place called Coxyde. Then, one day, an official notice arrived calling for volunteers "for an undertaking of real danger." Thirty men were needed and no officers. Young read the notice to his gun-crew, and although most of them had been on active service for two years and had suffered heavy casualties, double the number of volunteers required stepped forward. A few days later Young himself was recalled home for special service and ordered to report on board H.M.S. *Hindustan*. "It is something very pink," he was told. "There will be a fight." There was to be no mistake about either the pinkness

or the fighting, for a few days later Young found himself at Chatham aboard the *Vindictive*. After some false starts the raid on Zeebrugge was launched. In that heroic action he was wounded in the shoulder, so severely that ultimately he lost his right arm, but he managed to crawl to the dressing-station to have the wound temporarily bandaged, and then returned to his guns, refusing to go below until the battered *Vindictive* was well on her way home. Not bad for a pacifist! It is a tribute to Young's reputation that, although not a professional sailor, he should have been chosen to take part in so difficult and perilous an enterprise; and the way in which he acquitted himself shows what manner of man he is.

A spell in hospital followed, and then Young, now given special promotion to the rank of Lieutenant-Commander, was sent to Archangel. Here he commanded an armoured train during the abortive campaign in Russia, receiving the D.S.O. as a reward for his services.

He returned home in December, 1918, just in time to be elected Liberal Member for Norwich, the constituency which he still represents despite his altered allegiance. With that adaptability which had served him so well in different capacities and on diverse Fronts during the War years, he easily resumed his old interests. Finance had become the paramount issue for a Continent in which half the states were actual or virtual bankrupts and in which currencies soared and dipped like the rockets of a belated Peace celebration. Hilton Young's expert financial

knowledge and experience were soon utilized. In 1920 he was sent on a mission to India to study the wayward habits of the rupee, and in the following year he became Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He represented this country at the Hague Conference on International Finance in 1922, and as financial adviser to Poland and Iraq he is reputed to have wrought miracles in the way of saving depleted Treasuries and balancing impossible Budgets.

The fall of Mr. Lloyd George was a set-back to his activities, and, tied as he was to the declining fortunes of the Liberal Party, his scope was necessarily limited. Now, however, he is a Conservative, and it may be predicted with confidence that, when Mr. Taper and Mr. Tadpole (who always dislike eminent converts) have had a little time in which to forget his past, he will get the office he deserves and for which the country needs him. Already he has made a start, for in 1927 he accompanied the British Delegation to Geneva, and he is going out very shortly to East Africa to advise on the subject of federation. When Lord Cecil recently returned to his lonely furrow and Ronald McNeill succeeded him as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, three names were mentioned for the post of Financial Secretary to the Treasury. To the outsider there could be little doubt which of those three was the best qualified for the post. *Dis aliter visum*. But the day of promotion cannot be long postponed, although there are those who forecast promotion to the Speaker's Chair rather than to an office in the Government.

Hilton Young is now a man of forty-eight, but is youthful for his years. Short but distinguished-looking, with a fine head, a keen, sensitive expression, a charming smile and a gentle, melodious voice, he is attractive and even impressive in his personal appearance. In 1922 he married Lady Scott, the widow of the famous Polar explorer, and his domestic happiness has been as marked as his public success. He has written a book on national finance which promises to be for many years to come the standard work on the subject. He has, too, a pleasant gift of verse; in 1919 he produced a slender volume entitled *A Muse at Sea*, containing a number of graceful, spontaneous little poems, written for the most part during such spare moments as he could find while serving in the Grand Fleet.

Yet his most remarkable qualities are his rare modesty; his adaptability; his readiness to profit by his experience; and a persistent idealism which he will never permit to be disillusioned away. It is perhaps this last faculty which is the most marked.

There was the shock of war, which shattered or embittered many men of sensitive temperament and a similar philosophy. Yet he rose to meet it, rendering of his best and gaining honour, distinction and a wound which cost him his right arm. Then there was the disappointment of the peace, which, keenly though he felt it, he would not allow to turn into cheap cynicism or despair. While he frankly recognizes the evil that came from the War and our lapse from that high unity of purpose that in some measure

redeemed it, he holds fast to his earlier vision of effort and sacrifice. "What man has once learned that he can do," he maintains, "he is wont, sooner or later, to do again." He loves to dwell on the type of manhood, courageous, gentle, finely tempered in nerve and will, joyous and untiring in devotion and fortitude, which the War produced.

"The War's apology," he wrote in the Introduction to his book *By Sea and Land*, "was that it produced such as these; its tragedy that it destroyed what it produced." The observation is lamentably true, but in reading it we may find some small satisfaction in recalling that a few men of that priceless type, such as Edward Hilton Young, have escaped the destruction and are able to bring to their country's aid through these difficult years some of those qualities which the War evoked.

Let us turn to our other naval politician, Lieutenant-Commander the Honourable Joseph Montague Kenworthy.

In the seventeenth century, if business or a craving for adventure took you on a voyage into West Indian waters, you were quite likely to fall in with a pirate. With ordinary luck he would prove to be a swash-buckling ruffian who would scatter your brains over the deck with the butt-end of a pistol or chase you down a plank to the expectant sharks without any uncomfortable preliminaries. That is what you would expect, and also what you would get from a roaring, drinking, foul-mouthed, tyrannical cut-throat like Blackbeard Teach. There was, however, another

type of pirate, less common and much less propitious. He would have a pleasant, cultured way with him ; address you in silky, insinuating tones ; and speak to his crew in so mild and lamb-like a fashion that you would be surprised at the ready response his words received from that company of hardened scoundrels. Presently, you would discover that appearances are sometimes deceptive ; that your gentle, polished host had an inexhaustible repertory of ingenious devices to precede the final ceremony of the plank ; and that these he would presently put in practice for his amusement but not for yours.

Somehow I have always fancied Joseph Kenworthy in this part. I can see that round face, like a Harvest moon, with its smooth black hair crowned with a tasselled piratical cap above a pair of immense earrings : that rotund figure, richly apparelled, hung with pistols and knives and glittering with jewellery. I can hear that pleasant, insistent voice lisping instructions to a cringing, terrorized crew or making polite suggestions to a victim. " Suppose," I can hear him say, " we were to tie this unfortunate fellow to a mast with some wope and put a wing of gunpowder wound him, and then set a match to the gunpowder, it would be wather nice, wouldn't it, to see what would happen next ? "

Joseph Kenworthy, after an education at the Royal Naval Academy and in H.M.S. *Britannia*, passed into the Navy in 1902. With the possible exception of the gunroom, the wardroom is the hardest known test of a man's power of mixing easily with his fellows

and of winning popularity. At such close quarters it is possible to make things very unpleasant for anyone who is objectionable, but his messmates cannot either avoid or ignore him. Of course, if you happen to be, as Kenworthy was, the champion heavy-weight boxer of the Senior Service, you should be sure of the immunity that is founded upon fear ; but if you also combine an oleaginous manner with a pushing disposition you will not be successful in gaining very much affection. Nor, in fact, was Kenworthy.

In 1908 he became a Lieutenant, and when war broke out he was still a Lieutenant, commanding a destroyer, H.M.S. *Bullfinch*. Many stories are current of that commission, some of them, if the truth be told, at Lieutenant Kenworthy's expense, because he is the kind of person who is an irresistible target for the slings and arrows of the irreverent. If his brother officers sometimes found his company a little uncongenial, it should be remembered to his credit that he was always popular with the lower deck.

He had three years of destroyer work, being promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Commander in 1916. In the following year he was recalled to serve on the Naval War Staff, and, a little later, was sent out to Gibraltar to become Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff there.

After the War he retired from the Service, and, when the lamented death of Mark Sykes made a vacancy at Central Hull, he stood as a Liberal and gained a striking victory over Lord Eustace Percy. Very soon he made his presence felt in the House, where his

wheedling voice was to be heard almost every day at question-time, asking, as often as not, the kind of question which barely concealed an insinuation. He was not a Service member of the usual sort, who is silent on most occasions, but becomes aggressively breezy when any matter touching his late profession is being debated. Kenworthy was prepared to speak on almost any subject under the sun, and, as a junior member cannot always catch the Speaker's eye at will, in default he asked questions and questions and questions. His strange appearance and his lisping voice became as familiar as many more notable personalities, both inside the House and, through the medium of caricature, to the public without. Like Napoleon and Henry VIII., he is an easy prey for the cartoonist, and appears regularly in *Punch*. There was one very apt cartoon representing him as a plump sea-lion emerging from the water and barking forth a cloud of little query-points so that sky and landscape were darkened.

I remember once taking into the Strangers' Gallery a young friend of mine who was paying his first visit to the House. In the middle of the debate Kenworthy, without waiting for the Speaker's summons, rose to his feet and began to speak. From every quarter cries of "Order!" resounded, but he finished his sentence before he gave way and sat down. We could not hear what he said, but there was a good deal of laughter.

"Commander Kenworthy?" whispered my friend, and I nodded assent.

"Good!" he ejaculated.



"Why?" I asked. "Are you interested in him?"

"Not especially, but I'm glad to have seen and heard him. He seems part of the show somehow."

"Part of the show!" That is just what he is, with his interruptions and his irrepressible flow of supplementary questions; or rather, perhaps, one of those side-shows which those who visit the great fair must not miss seeing.

Yet, to do him justice, he can speak wittily and incisively, and doubtless he has from time to time served a useful purpose by drawing attention to matters which would otherwise have lain hid. Occasionally, too, there are glimpses of a fertile and stimulating mind behind those criticizing questions, although the ideas which peep out are not always very practicable.

I once had the good fortune to hear him in his best form at a private meeting. A speaker, more remarkable for earnestness of purpose than for precision of thought or clarity of expression, had been addressing us. When he finished the hour was late and most of us were tired and thinking of our beds. Then Kenworthy got up. One hand was thrust behind his coat-tails in a favourite attitude of Mr. Pickwick's; the other, much be-ringed, brandished on high a small sheaf of notes; and the eye was further arrested by an immense cluster of small gold chains festooning his diaphragm. His speech, good-humoured but very much to the point, galvanized a drooping meeting into new life and at the same time demolished the unfortunate gentleman who had spoken before him.

When I heard him at a similar gathering the other day he had discarded his eccentric watch chain in favour of one of a more sober and conventional design, but had acquired a new and disconcerting mannerism. He punctuated his speech with vigorous thumps on the table in front of him, and in the crashes of that be-ringed fist many of his words were lost to his hearers.

In three general elections Central Hull returned Kenworthy as its representative by substantial majorities, and when, during the present Parliament, he suddenly announced his conversion to Labour, his constituents returned him once again in the resulting by-election ; a sign that they cared more about the personality of their member than they did about his politics. Since the great change he has, he claims, established the friendliest relations with the Labour Party ; he professes great admiration and affection for Mr. Kirkwood ; he has lately fraternized with that fellow-convert, Mr. Oswald Mosley ; he has presented a framed photograph of " the first Labour M.P. for Hull " to the Hull Trades Union and Labour Club ; and so far he has not found among his new friends that rigid, cast-iron discipline which is his bugbear after seventeen years in the Royal Navy.

The Labour Party, on the other hand, is finding him quite useful. In press and platform notices Kenworthy is now described as " the only M.P. with naval service and expert knowledge on the Opposition side." Over China, too, he took a line which at once commended him to a considerable section of

his allies. He scoffed at the suggestion that the large British community in Shanghai was in any danger. He stated that he was against voting the credits required to enable troops to be dispatched, declaring that if it rested with him he would "move every soldier and every warship from China, and the people would be perfectly safe." Fortunately the decision did not rest with Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy.

During 1927 he paid a visit to America, where he was much impressed by the industrial organization there, returning to this country a warm advocate of mass production and, indeed, of all things American except the plays which he saw in New York and which, he said, shocked him profoundly. Possibly this nascent Puritanism accounts for his recent appointment over here as a censor of films.

People do not as a rule change their politics without reason. To-day the plight of Liberalism is sufficient cause by itself to send promising young men to seek their fortunes in other camps; but with Kenworthy I am inclined to think that other considerations counted even more.

When you are in charge of a side-show you must make up for the triviality of your entertainment by the ingenuity of your advertisement. You must cry its delights to such purpose that no passer-by can possibly escape hearing all about them. Above all, you must seek novelty. Catchwords and slogans lose their power by repetition (even as Mr. Cook found in 1926), and when you want to persuade people

that if only they will step your way, you will show them something which really and truly they have never seen before, you must keep your publicity up to date. Otherwise people will begin to become used to you ; your cries will fall on deaf ears ; and custom will pass you by on its way to the fun of the fair.

I think that fear of something like this happening had a little to do with Kenworthy's recent conversion. The novelty of his odd figure, with its questions and supplementary questions and interruptions, was wearing off. The House of Commons accustoms itself in time to anything and anyone ; it was beginning to take Kenworthy as a matter of course, and his contributions to the business of the day as being as much part of the order of things as was once the obstructiveness of Sir Frederick Banbury or as are now the stentorian interjections of Mr. Jack Jones. Such a state of affairs was at all costs to be avoided. The need was clearly for some sudden, dramatic stroke, focussing attention once more on the essential actor. The man who changes his Party will always have a Press, though not necessarily a good Press ; and if he can follow his conversion with one of the stormiest by-elections of the times he will obtain all the temporary attention he wants.

But there was, I think, yet another gentle influence that drew Kenworthy towards the light.

In the year 1916 the ancient barony of Strabolgi was called out of a long abeyance in favour of Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy's father. We may

presume that it was the present Lord Strabolgi who was mainly responsible for effecting this happy restoration. To what extent in doing so he consulted the feelings of his son and heir I do not know ; perhaps Joseph was safely at sea and not available for consultation. But the abeyance was ended, and when, in the order of Nature, Lord Strabolgi is gathered to his fathers, Kenworthy will find himself in queer company.

Frankly, I cannot see him in the House of Lords. I cannot picture that outlandish, questioning figure waving be-ringed hands in their Lordships' faces. I rather doubt whether he can see himself there. It is wise to cherish no illusions. Many a bright young Commoner has been translated to the Upper House, assuring himself cheerfully that he would soon wake it up. But a yawn is a dreadfully contagious thing, and in the end the youthful optimist has either been absorbed by those dignified, somnolent figures, or else has fled in disgust from political life.

So there is no time to lose. Joseph must make his mark quickly, his hay while the sun shines.

To others, let it be confessed, this prospect of the future is not unpleasing ; and his victims in the House of Commons, when their exasperation is most acute, may, as many ministers have done before them, thank Heaven for the House of Lords.

## LORD MILNER'S YOUNG MEN

*There was a young man of Redruth,  
Who set out on a search for the truth,  
Which his elders, who knew  
That nothing was true,  
Remarked as a symptom of youth.*

By LIONEL CURTIS  
(in a rare moment of frivolity).

THEY reappeared in London somewhere about the year 1910. South Africa, of course, knew all about them. Some of them had gone out to fight in the War, and, having conquered the Boer, had stayed on to civilize him; while the others had hastened joyously out to help in the good work. They were young, they were earnest, they were full of the most excellent intentions, and the mockers, who were many, dubbed them Lord Milner's Kindergarten. Later, Lord Selborne took them over with the fixtures of the High Commissioner's residence, and the good work went on. They reorganized the municipalities of the Transvaal; they blossomed into editors and town clerks; and South Africa, which had never seen anything quite like them before, began to say that,

if this was Oxford, what sort of a place was Cambridge ? There was Lionel Curtis, serving his apprenticeship as the unlikeliest town clerk that Johannesburg has ever had. (Yet, despite the historic occasion when he forgot to pay the water bill and the city went unexpectedly and involuntarily dry, the critics were compelled to admit the work well done.) There was Geoffrey Dawson (who was then called Geoffrey Robinson), qualifying on the *Johannesburg Star* for his future editorship of the *Times*. There was Lionel Hitchens, now chairman of the great engineering firm of Cammell Laird. There were Dove, Malcolm, Brand, Craik, and one or two who, though not exactly in the Kindergarten, may be regarded as day-boys. And there were those fallen angels, Richard Jebb and John Buchan, the former of whom lapsed later into heresy with a book on Colonial Nationalism, while the latter succumbed to an early and incurable weakness for writing works of fiction.

The Kindergarten's first opportunity came when, after the granting of responsible government, the old dream of a united South Africa returned. How large was their share in the creation of the union of the four colonies the world outside has never realized, for then, as later, they chose to work in obscurity, leaving the credit for others to take, suggesting, influencing, inspiring, but always shunning the public gaze. In an age now remote it may fall to the fortune of some expert in the comparative study of texts to discover traces of the same authorship in the Selborne memorandum, which was the basis of South African

Union, as in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, which was the starting point of the Indian Reforms.

The Union of South Africa was at length happily brought to birth, and, while the reputed parents were still mutually and publicly congratulating each other, the young men from Oxford slipped away to the next job.

They had settled South Africa. What now? The answer came to their acknowledged leader, Lionel Curtis, in a moment of inspiration induced by reading F. S. Oliver's brilliant study of Alexander Hamilton, a romance of constitution-making which describes the advent of some semblance of organic unity into the dis-United States of America. A parallel swiftly suggested itself to Curtis. There was the British Empire, that monument of Anglo-Saxon absent-mindedness, huge, inchoate, disorganized, laden with power for good or evil. What Hamilton had tried to do to the United States, he would try to do for the British Empire.

Now there was one quality common to every good member of Lord Milner's Kindergarten. They were men with tidy minds. They could not tolerate disorder, either of the mental sort that produces confused thinking on great subjects, or of the political sort that is at once the cause and the result of a confused constitution. They were ever at war with the incorrigible intellectual sloppiness of the Briton, with his vague pride in an unwritten constitution which he had never tried to understand, his talk of freedom "broadening down from precedent to precedent,"



his love of formulæ which could mean anything, or nothing, and his aversion from defining anything that he could possibly leave obscure. In the perfect Milnerian State, they argued, all this sort of thing must go. Everything must be clearly set down in black and white ; every question which an intelligent foreigner might put must have a ready-made answer waiting for it ; every schoolboy must be able to explain the meaning of sovereignty without even using that hatefully ambiguous word, and must know not only what it is but where it is ; every function of every official must be lucidly expounded, docketed, pigeon-holed and card-indexed. There must be no more talk of "muddling through," "of letting things work themselves out," of "give and take," or of "leaving well alone." All these were lessons learnt in the lowest form of the Kindergarten, from the lips of a master in whom it was possible to detect, among many priceless qualities, the faint flavour of a Prussian bureaucrat.

The British Empire is naturally a standing affront to this type of mind. What an example of intellectual disorder ! And what an opportunity—and a temptation—for an up-to-date Abbé Sieyès ! Where did the supreme sovereignty (again that dreadful word !) reside ? What was the precise relationship between the mother-country and the Dominions ? When Great Britain declared war, was Canada automatically involved ? If she was, what became of your Dominion self-government ? And if she was not, what became of your Empire ? Really, in their blind and blunder-

ing way our forefathers had been keeping an Augean Stable and calling it a Castle.

It was a trifling transformation for the midwives of South African Union to become the charwomen of the British Empire. For Lionel Curtis the new task was infinitely congenial. It gave scope for those majestic mental processes in which he excelled. One must begin, of course, by getting back to First Principles. One must link the immediate problem with the great cosmic movements of history. One must reduce "the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome" to a few political axioms. One must explain the decline of Spain. One must account for the failure of France. And, after mournful reflection on the schism of the American Colonies, one must show how all previous Imperial experiments were brought to naught through the moral or mental untidiness of those who directed them. Then, after an exhaustive analysis of the existing disorganization of the British Empire, one must proceed with cautious and deliberate steps to suggest the broad principles of a new Constitution. The final stage, envisaged though never reached, was the framing of a brand-new, comprehensive, written constitution for the British Empire.

Someone once remarked that if you wanted to argue with Lionel Curtis you should vehemently dispute his opening proposition; for, that admitted, the rest of his case forms an unbreakable chain of logic. But the Grand Tour of the Empire which he now made was much more than a debating victory. Wherever

he went he left behind him groups of earnest seekers after the truth, whom he subsequently plied with masses of literature in green and grey covers. Some he converted at a sitting by the spell of his personality and his eloquence; others, who tried to oppose him in debate, he talked to a standstill; and all discovered that it is much better to do at once what Lionel Curtis tells you to do, because you will inevitably do it in the end.

So the Movement was launched. After the Grand Tour it was England's turn. By this time most of the old Kindergarten had come home, and under their auspices an office was opened in Piccadilly and an attempt was made to reproduce in London the methods of the Moot House at Johannesburg.

You must picture them in their new setting. Lionel Curtis, the halo of prophecy already surrounding his grizzled curls, is standing before the fire, emphasizing his points with little forward jerks of his body. His articulation suggests a man who, like Demosthenes, has his mouth full of pebbles; but such is his grave enthusiasm and even, at times, his eloquence, that this peculiarity, like Winston's lisp, is soon forgotten by his hearers. Philip Kerr, a faintly quizzical smile on his clever face, is clinging obstinately to some small point in dispute, and Lionel Hitchens, whose features recall Lord Kitchener in his youth, stretches his long length in a low chair and joins in. John Dove, concealing a deal of sense under rather a Pickwickian exterior, is trying to bring them back to the point they were discussing ten minutes

ago. Ned Grigg has just flung a flippant remark at Brand, who ignores it as unseemly, and at Dougie Malcolm, who promptly caps it with a classical quotation. And in a corner sits Craik, muttering reaction and wondering what a good Tory like himself is doing in such wild company.

The Movement, of course, had to have its organ, and very soon the *Round Table* began its career, with Philip Kerr and Grigg as editors. The name of the new quarterly, it may be observed, created a misconception which may perhaps have been intentional. While the thoughts of the uninitiated were turned towards King Arthur and knightly endeavour, what the title was really meant to affirm was the principle of a round-table conference. "Let us get together and talk," said its creators in effect, "and answers will be found to these awkward questions we have been asking." That at the outset was all they demanded ; they did not mention that the answers were already written out and reposing in Lionel Curtis's pocket.

England, or that section of it chosen for conversion, scarcely knew what to make of it all. *Ex Africa semper aliquid novi*. In the 'nineties the Illicit Diamond Buyers had invaded Belgravia ; but this new export did not admit of so simple an explanation. The greatest successes were scored at Oxford, where Lionel Curtis suddenly appeared as Beit Reader in Colonial History. His success in his new guise was as gratifying to his friends as it was disconcerting to donnish sceptics. There were not wanting mockers

who talked of "a new Jesuit movement" and sneered at "the ex-town clerk of a tin and trumpery town;" but these were but the gibes of disappointed aspirants. Curtis had a message the reality of which cut like a knife through the make-belief of University politics; and he showed, as he always does, an indefatigable kindness to the young and immature which won him many devoted friends. The undergraduates, of course, took it all very seriously. They became more prophetic than the prophet himself. On Sunday nights they would sprawl on the floor of some crowded room while an empire-builder or a Canadian professor or a government expert told them about the colour dispute in South Africa or the question of defence in the Pacific. From time to time, too, visits were paid by really big people, such as Cabinet Ministers and Proconsuls. They also for a while seemed to be under the spell; but as they were not quite sure what it was all about they often confined their remarks to the broadest of platitudes, which could not be used as evidence against them at some future date. Of course they had not learnt the new language. Sometimes they would be a little "jingo" and the converts (converts are so zealous!) would shudder with horror. And when they talked of the Empire, the undergraduates, who knew better and called it the "Commonwealth of Nations," would draw in their breath sharply, as though an infinitive had been split.

Above all, there was the Problem. They always came back to that. It was so important, and while the outside world went on wrangling about Home Rule

and Welsh Disestablishment and Plural Voting, the initiated talked in stage whispers of Federation, Unification, the Creation of a Central Body to control certain functions, Communicated Responsibilities, and so on. Also they never wearied of saying that war (of which, of course, they entirely disapproved) would be the acid test. They declared that unless something was done soon, something awful would happen to the Emp—the Commonwealth of Nations.

So the undergraduates talked and disputed, and in the background Curtis, eternally in sympathy with the enthusiasm of youth, watched his disciples with a kindly eye and a great patience.

In 1914 the War came. The response of the Dominions, though gratifying, was disconcerting to some of the younger zealots. A little reluctance, a certain hesitation, would, it was felt, have been more natural. But the Dominions came in at once, and stayed in until the end, which was very loyal if not very logical of them. However, there were other things for an undergraduate who had hurried into khaki to think about. So the Movement suspended most of its activities, and the Problem was put aside against a more propitious day.

But for Lionel Curtis the War brought no respite but a new task. The wise prophet, when he finds his disciples deserting him, carries his mission into fresh fields; and Lionel Curtis, having seen the Problem into its pigeon-hole, cast a roving eye over the British Empire and decided that India had need of him.

The story of his Indian adventure is too long to be told in full. From the moment of landing in Bombay he began to demand from the Government of India an account of its stewardship. With perfect courtesy, he nearly drove a number of civilians of high rank and long experience into an apoplexy, merely by asking them the ultimate purpose of British rule. This was a question which they were entirely unable to answer. "But the Civil Service," they protested, "is not concerned with politics." "Then it ought to be," retorted Curtis. They sulked, they raged, they wrote spiteful letters; at one time, very stupidly, they tried to boycott him (as though you could boycott Lionel Curtis!). In the end they capitulated without any of the honours of war. When Mr. E. S. Montagu, the Secretary of State, reached the capital on his historic visit, with him was Lionel Curtis, as inevitable and as unwelcome as the Cheshire cat, jotting down notes for the report which Mr. Montagu was to father and Lord Chelmsford to sign.

He left India, bequeathing it his blessing and the principle of dyarchy, which a good many people still maintain to be simply a new name for anarchy.

Of his subsequent activities at Versailles I cannot speak with much authority, but no one has seriously charged him with the Peace Treaties. At this stage, one feels, there was a lack of opportunity. Lionel Curtis might have been ready to play Colonel House to someone else's President Wilson, but Mr. Lloyd George did not quite fit the part.

Nor, passing to his next enterprise, is it fair to lay on

his shoulders the burden of the Irish Free State. If he had had his way in 1913—but Ireland's history is a catalogue of tragic "ifs." At least in 1921, as secretary to the Cabinet Committee which conducted the negotiations, he made probably the best that could have been made of a bad job.

After the establishment of the Free State, he took charge for a time of Irish affairs at the Colonial Office, until, earning his release, he was able to devote himself more freely to his new venture, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, on whose expensive premises the serious-minded are taught to be good Europeans. Recently he has disengaged himself even from the routine work of the Institute so as to be freer to resume the historical and political research for which he holds his fellowship at All Souls, and for which, in the opinion of many of his friends, he is pre-eminently qualified. His other activities, however, continue, albeit in a modified form. At the Institute, whether it is a question of arranging an important discussion or of raising a new fund, he is indispensable; and he attended last summer the Pan-Pacific Congress at Honolulu, with the laudable object of expounding the integrity of British policy in China.

There is something about Lionel Curtis which tempts one to undue flippancy, and tempts one, too, to conceal the real admiration and affection which those who know and understand him must feel for him. For he is a great man, and he has done a great work. He has a genius for political surgery, though, like other masters of diagnosis, he is a little too fond



of the knife. No one, however, can impugn his single-minded devotion and service. He has not a personal ambition in the world, he has shunned the limelight so successfully that even to-day the majority of Englishmen have not heard of him, and he has inspired and knows how to retain the devotion of a multitude of loyal and capable friends. I do not believe he has ever made a private enemy, though there are plenty of people who join with the *Morning Post* in regarding him as a national danger, and plenty more whom he has treated as though they were a public meeting, a mode of address which, like Queen Victoria, they are inclined to resent. On the whole, it is a fortunate Empire which can produce a Lionel Curtis, and is then wise enough to allow him a reasonable measure of activity.

But, meanwhile, what of the Movement, which, gathering the momentum of a steam-hammer, was to forge the separate parts of the Empire into a solid whole? That is a mournful story. Since the War, Imperial Federation has receded into the background. It has ceased to be—if indeed it ever was—practical politics. The Dominions, busy with their own affairs, are suspicious of European entanglements; and at home we are chiefly interested in our million unemployed and in the manœuvres of the Third International. Yet the problem remains, and the case, as argued by Lionel Curtis in the years immediately preceding the War, is still strong—on paper. But the last Imperial Conference has perhaps shown us a choice other than federation or disruption, and has

certainly induced many to revise their opinion that the members of the Empire, in the absence of anything stronger than a sentimental bond to draw them together, may slowly slip apart.

To some extent, certainly, the Movement has been prejudiced by the preoccupations of its leaders. Lionel Curtis, as we have seen, has of late years been busy with India, Ireland, the Colonial Office and his Institute, while his playmates of the old Kindergarten, who might have taken his place, have tended to go their own ways. Hichens, *fidus Achates*, has had to concentrate on selling Sheffield steel and Birkenhead ships in an unresponsive market. Brand, as a partner in a big financial house, is too much occupied with manipulating millions in a world of fluctuating currencies. Malcolm is a director of the Chartered Company of South Africa. Geoffrey Dawson is the overworked editor of the *Times*. Some of them, including Curtis himself, have married wives, a notable breach of the prophetic tradition, and all of them—and the Movement with them—are becoming a little middle-aged.

Also, it must be confessed that the younger men, to whom in course of time the prophet would have tossed his mantle, have been rather a disappointment. More than once the chariot of fire has waited at the door; the prophet has stood by, muttering impatiently, fingering the raiment to be discarded, and looking at his watch. Yet—the feet of the young men tarry. The mantle is perhaps a little unconventional in cut, it is old-fashioned, even threadbare;

and, anyhow, second-hand clothes are always unbecoming. So the chariot drives sadly back to the mews, the prophet returns to his prophecy, and the disciples—remain disciples.

There were two of them, indeed, of whom the highest hopes were entertained. There was Edward Grigg, who hid the moral earnestness that befits a Knight of the Round Table under a rather keener humour than was altogether appropriate. Or was it the other way round? He fought in France, serving with distinction in the Brigade of Guards, where standards are high and criticism is candid. He escorted the Prince of Wales on one of his Imperial tours. He succeeded Philip Kerr as Secretary to Mr. Lloyd George. In 1922 he stood for Parliament. He contested and won Oldham, and in the elections of 1923 and 1924 he successfully retained both his Liberalism and his seat. Maybe the Carlton Club was his spiritual home, but in these days a man might lodge in strange company and be none the worse esteemed. After the last election he failed to follow Mr. Churchill in his swift and adventurous passage of the chasm that separates the desert places of Liberalism from the pleasant pastures of the Primrose League. Instead, he accepted the governorship of Kenya Colony, where rumour has it that he is doing well in difficult circumstances. He has recently appeared as the protagonist of a scheme for the ultimate federation of the East and Central African dependencies, a sign, perhaps, that the old passion is still alive. But Nairobi is a long way from

that little office in London, where the dusty mantle of the prophet hangs upon the door.

Then there is that enigmatic person, Philip Kerr, who stood at one time unchallengeably first in the succession. Like Grigg, he has been editor of the *Round Table*, secretary for Dominions and Foreign Affairs to Mr. Lloyd George, and secretary to the Rhodes Trust ; though I have not yet heard his name mentioned as the next governor of Kenya.

Kerr is a man of the most brilliant intellectual gifts. Whatever he does is done with an effortless competence which silences criticism. He talks well and writes better, he is an admirable secretary, and his knowledge of Imperial and European conditions is enormous. Yet somehow, whenever people speak of Philip Kerr, they always end with a "but." Perhaps the promise was so great that the achievement was bound to fall short. Perhaps the sort of reputation he earned requires a little adroit window-dressing, which he is temperamentally incapable of giving it. Or is he just a little inhuman ? Or are there blind spots in his sense of humour ? Or is he another illustration of the truth that a young man of promise is like the watched pot that never boils ? I really do not know. Anyhow, the fact remains that he has never quite arrived. There is, it is true, a peculiar strain of something very like crankiness in him, which has led him to embrace some rather odd causes with the ardour of the fanatic. And although the English breed cranks and fanatics more prolifically than any other nation except the United States, they do not

really trust them. One day Philip Kerr may assume the prophet's mantle, but what his message would be none may foretell.

Meanwhile the Movement flags. The *Round Table* continues to provide first-class and highly informative reading four times a year to, I suspect, a diminishing public. The remnants of the faithful meet periodically and continue to ask the old questions which none can answer. But the zest has gone, for a Movement, like a ship at sea, should move somewhere ; and if its destination is for the moment uncertain, it will incline not to move but to drift ; and if a large part of the crew has stolen away in bumboats, and the captain keeps darting off in his gig to intercept passing vessels, it is unlikely to drift into any particular port.

It may be that, when in future years the story of Lord Milner's Kindergarten is written, men will point to the Union of South Africa, or to the Dominion of India, or even to the Irish Free State, and say, "This was largely the work of Lionel Curtis and his friends." But the Federation of the Empire, at least in our generation, must remain the fabric of a dream.

## *TWO PROCONSULS*

*Lord Lloyd and Lord Irwin*

IN the eighteenth century, when one was young and rich, one went on the Grand Tour. Generally one was accompanied by a tutor, preferably a servile creature in Holy Orders; and when, money and tutor alike exhausted, one returned home, one's polite education was regarded as complete. That was the old style. It was natural, as the nineteenth century marched on its way, and foreign travel began to be the luxury not only of the young and rich but also of the old and poor, that the former should seek their culture elsewhere. It does not really matter whether they found it in those wilder lands to which their footsteps turned; it is doubtful whether the majority, at any rate, of an earlier generation absorbed very much of it in Florence or Weimar. But the young men enjoyed themselves hugely in Bokhara or Trebizond, in Arabia Deserta or Thibet, and the natives of those far countries, losing very little time in making the discovery that all Englishmen, though afflicted by Allah with madness, had also been endowed by Eblis with great wealth, usually enjoyed themselves still

more. The fashion was formed and spread. It lingered on into the present century, and is only waning to-day before the mass attacks of Messrs. Cook and Lunn on the desert places of the earth.

In the years immediately before the War the two most distinguished of our younger travellers were Mark Sykes and Aubrey Herbert. They were among the more active and prominent of the Young Conservatives of their day, listened to with attention in the House and marked out for future office. They had, too, a literary gift that enabled them to tell the story of their travels. There was a vitality, an exuberance about them which was always taking them into odd places and odder company; and a charm which never failed to win them friends in the remotest spots and among the most unlikely people. This much resemblance there was between two men otherwise so dissimilar.

Each had his own pet sphere of operations, though each occasionally forsook it and trespassed. Herbert's was the Near East, and more particularly Albania. I have always understood that he might have obtained the invidious and cacophonous office of Mpret, had he desired it; but he did not, and the prize fell to that "transient and embarrassed phantom" Prince William of Wied, a much less effective monarch for an unruly people.

Mark Sykes was inclined to stray further afield. The East was his second home. As a boy he visited Syria with his father; as an undergraduate he travelled in the Hauran, and again through Syria and Armenia

into Russia ; and, when he came back from the South African War, there were more journeyings, mostly in the outlying parts of the Turkish Empire.

Both Mark Sykes and Aubrey Herbert played useful and active parts in the Great War, and neither long survived it. Sykes died in Paris during the peace negotiations. Herbert, after facing with cheerful courage the gradual loss of his sight, died four years later. Both men were mourned with equal sincerity in those far lands where they had wandered and in the Yorkshire and West Country homes to which they returned at the journeys' end. When Mr. Baldwin went down to Somerset during the election of 1924, he told a great audience that he would like to see Yeovil revert to its old allegiance " for Aubrey Herbert's sake " ; and there was something deeper than perfunctory approval in the applause that followed.

Of Mark Sykes one memory, which I have never seen in print, may be worth recalling.

In the late summer of 1915 he appeared suddenly at Simla, dressed in a shabby khaki uniform. When he had been decently clothed in a pair of the Viceroy's evening trousers, Simla was kind enough to sit down and take stock of him. Really, he was rather a disconcerting, *outré* figure to intrude into those ceremonious circles ; a second Gulliver come to Brobdingnag—or Lilliput. The man could talk about nothing but the War. Of course the Government of India knew all about the War. It knew about everything, but it particularly knew about the War. Had it not lately in its wisdom instructed General



Townshend to begin his march on Baghdad? Was it not common knowledge that with the departure of the Regular Cavalry to France station polo had gone simply to pieces? Then why these lectures? As a matter of fact, at that very moment at Viceregal Lodge they were busy rehearsing a "show" for the benefit of a War charity—never mind which. And it must be understood that when the A.D.C.s are trying to learn their parts and to coach the ladies of the cast in theirs it *is* rather a bore when a johnny blows in from nowhere in particular and *will go on talking* about the blessed old war. (Gallipoli? Gallipoli? Where *is* Gallipoli?)

So for a space Mark Sykes wandered about Viceregal Lodge like a lost spirit, until one day he happened to stroll into the room during a rehearsal of the "show." There was a comment, a criticism, a suggestion; and then—no one quite knew how it happened—the Concert Party found it had taken on a new stage manager. I need hardly add that the subsequent performance was one of the most successful within the memory of Simla.

Aubrey Herbert and Mark Sykes are dead, but they left pupils behind them of the same school and the same tradition. Of these the most distinguished is probably George Lloyd; and it is a sign of the increasing intelligence of the times that whereas in the old days we allowed our young travellers on their return to settle down to the writing of books or the farming of estates, now we make use of them according to their experience and qualifications. So George

Lloyd has been Governor of Bombay and is to-day High Commissioner in Egypt.

He is an admirable example of the travelled Englishman, whose national pride and insular prejudices not merely survive but are intensified by his wanderings; and who at the same time is never happy for long, set down in a quiet corner of England. To George Lloyd, I think, home is really "somewheres east of Suez"; and I am quite sure that his spirits perceptibly sink at that great moment when the first gleam of white cliff tells of the end of the journey.

A member of the famous banking family of Lloyd, he was born in 1879 at Warwick Priory, a beautiful old house recently saved from demolition to incur the more horrible fate of being transported bodily, stone by stone, across the Atlantic. His interest in the East began early, and as soon as he had gone down from Cambridge he started on his travels. Sometimes alone and sometimes in company with a kindred spirit, he wandered about India, Little Thibet, Egypt, Asia Minor and Morocco, making an especial study of the peoples and politics and problems of these diverse lands. For a time he was honorary attaché to the Embassy at Constantinople, and in 1908, at the age of twenty-nine, he was appointed a Special Commissioner to report on the future of British trade in Turkey, Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf—a task both congenial and appropriate.

In 1910 he was elected to Parliament as Unionist Member for West Staffordshire. Although his new duties kept him more closely to England than he liked,

he seized every available opportunity that occurred of rushing off to his much-loved East. Moreover, there were compensations in politics. George Lloyd is one of those rare persons who not only enjoy making speeches but are not ashamed to admit their taste. People generally like doing what they know they can do well, yet almost everyone, male or female, who has to make and can make speeches in public, will say, "I hate speaking." Usually their hearers accept this assurance without troubling to inquire why, if it be true, these oratorical martyrs have chosen a calling which involves continually doing the very thing they profess to dislike. There is no pretence of this sort about George Lloyd. "I love speaking," he says, when another public man seeks his sympathy. And sometimes, if the other man happens to be a good speaker, he will add: "And I don't believe you hate it either."

Lloyd himself, of course, is an excellent speaker who can always enrich his theme with imaginative word-pictures which give it reality and romance for his hearers.

Not long after his election to Parliament, Lloyd married Miss Blanche Lascelles, one of Queen Alexandra's maids of honour and a cousin of Lord Lascelles. She shares his love of travel, and many are the journeys they have made together.

Then came the war, but just before it broke out an incident occurred in which George Lloyd played a part the importance of which is becoming recognized. We were at the crisis, and the Government was

believed, not without reason, to be wavering in its support of France. It was suggested that an assurance from the leaders of the Opposition, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Bonar Law, would be decisive. Unfortunately, the Unionist leaders were scattered over the countryside for the August holiday, and it seemed it would be impossible to bring them to London in time to avert disaster. A hurried council of war met, I believe, in Sir Henry Wilson's house, George Lloyd being among those who were present. That night he raced out of London in his car, returning in time for breakfast, dirty, unshaven but triumphant, bringing a missing Conservative statesman with him. Before midday the Unionist party was pledged to support the Government in facing the great issue.

During the War, Lloyd, who held a commission as captain in the Warwickshire Yeomanry, went East once more, accompanying his regiment to Egypt and Gallipoli. Other and more special work was soon found for him to do, and in the latter years of the War he ranged at large in the Middle East. On one occasion he rode with Lawrence on a raid, earning the high commendation of a man who was not always a lenient critic either of soldiers or of politicians. Lawrence described him as "the rare sort of traveller who could eat anything with anybody, anyhow and at any time."

In those days Lloyd certainly added to his reputation. He won the name of being "a man who gets things done," and it was as much on this account as through his knowledge of the East that in 1918,

at the age of thirty-nine, he was appointed Governor of Bombay.

He had not been long in his new post before he had further opportunities of displaying his great qualities of courage and firmness. India, in the months immediately following the War, was not a comfortable place. There was trouble on the frontier, where the Afghans broke bounds ; there was trouble in the Punjab, when General Dyer held his musketry practice in the gardens of Amritsar ; there was trouble from Gandhi, then at the height of his influence ; and there was trouble from the Khilafat movement, anxious to avenge the humiliation of Turkey. Lloyd found the Bombay Presidency in a state of seething unrest, and in December there were organized riots at Ahmedabad and Gujerat. Sir George (as he had then become) acted with vigour and decision. He insisted on maintaining law and order, without yielding an inch. At first he showed remarkable patience, but at last he declared that unless the Mahatma were arrested he could no longer be responsible for the peace of the Presidency. The Government of India, irresolute in the face of non-co-operation, wavered and procrastinated. Then Lloyd, faced with a critical situation, acted on his own initiative. He arrested Gandhi and the Khilafat leaders, and, to the surprise and relief of the " mug-wumps " in high places, none of the gloomy forecasts of revolution was realized.

Apart from his success in dealing with internal disorder, Sir George's administration was notable for the construction of the great dam across the Indus at

Sukkur, now known as the Lloyd Barrage, and for providing for the establishment within ten years of compulsory education throughout the Presidency.

When his term of office in India closed he left amid sincere regret. Both he and Lady Lloyd, who has great charm and social sense, were exceedingly popular ; the latter, in particular, being a welcome change after the autocracy of Lady Willingdon. There had been a strain of originality in Lloyd's administration which was refreshing by contrast with the staid officialism of many of his colleagues. For example, there is a story that a large sum of money from the proceeds of the totalizator on the race-course was handed to the Governor for disposal among such charities as he might select ; and that, to the surprise of the British community, he handed the whole of it over to the Cowley Fathers at Poona.

On his return to England Sir George Lloyd re-entered Parliament as Member for Eastbourne. It seemed certain that he would be given office in the Government, but Fate determined otherwise, and in 1925 he went out to Egypt as Lord Lloyd to take Lord Allenby's place as High Commissioner.

Here he found enough embarrassing legacies to alarm any man, especially one of his nervous temperament. When he arrived Lord Allenby had just learnt that it was easier to conquer Palestine than to rule Egypt. Since the War Downing Street had blown hot and cold ; and the Egyptian, who will tolerate almost anything except tepidity, had drawn his own conclusions ; which conclusions had led him

by devious but deliberate stages to the murder of Sir Lee Stack.

In many ways Lord Lloyd was better qualified than Lord Allenby to deal with the ensuing situation. He knew the Egyptian through and through, and he was perfectly aware of that interpretation of "give and take" under which as much is taken and as little given as possible. Politically, the interpretation holds good of many nations, but of none more surely than of Egypt. The Egyptian is a little like the bad child who is always trying to see just how far he can go in naughtiness; who will drive parent or governess up to but not (if he can help it) quite over the edge of desperation; and who always ends by discovering through painful experience the exact limits to the patience of authority.

The Egyptian had been playing this game with gusto for years. He had a grievance; did we redress it, he found another; did we not redress it, he exploited it, first by protest, then by intensive agitation, and finally, if all went well, by violence. Lord Allenby and Downing Street presented an irresistible temptation to the experts in this form of sport, who only found how far they could go on that day when Lord Allenby, escorted by a regiment of British Cavalry, paid a morning call at the royal palace.

But Lord Lloyd is quite another matter. He is able to steal the horse when Lord Allenby would not have been allowed to look over the stable wall. The Egyptians understand the High Commissioner very nearly as well as the High Commissioner understands

them ; and for the moment the game is off. It was said of Captain Blood of Bellocian fame :

*“ Blood understands the Eastern mind,  
He said, ‘ We must be firm but kind.’ ”*

A mutiny resulted. Lord Lloyd would never make a remark of that kind, but his administration of Egypt shows that he thinks there is some sense in Blood’s statement. So far no mutiny has resulted.

As a personality Lloyd is more attractive to men than to women, though I hesitate to condemn him to the label of “ a man’s man.” He is interesting in conversation, eager, enthusiastic and always ready to listen. A distinguished public man, now dead, once remarked of him that he had “ a strange power of persistence without penetration.” This observation from one of the most acute of judges applied rather to Lloyd’s youth than to his maturer years. He decidedly improves on better acquaintance. Strangers and inferiors are apt at first to find his manner unprepossessing, and are ill at ease with him ; but their discomfort soon passes. His A.D.C.s and personal staff, in Egypt as in India, are devoted to him, claiming that no one could be juster, more appreciative, or a better man to serve than their dark, sallow-complexioned, bullet-headed little chief. He has not an air of great astuteness, but gives an impression of nervous vitality and concentration. When he unbends, as he can very graciously on occasions, his smile is genial and pleasant ; but it scarcely seems



a part of him ; it will appear in his talk and then vanish completely, giving place in a flash to his usual serious, intent look.

By contrast, we have his friend, that other young proconsul, Lord Irwin, tall and slight, with pale, narrow face and dark eyes ; a thinker—even, perhaps, a dreamer. He has none of Lord Lloyd's love of travel. To him home and happiness alike are to be found in England, more particularly in Yorkshire. Nothing but a compelling sense of duty could have sent him out to a five years' exile, far from his beloved Garrowby. Left to himself he would ask for nothing better than to be allowed to live in peace in his Yorkshire dales, planning new schemes for his garden, talking to those farmers whose society he prefers to that of almost anyone else.

Probably there are plenty of men in England to-day with better brains than Edward Wood ; but I doubt whether one could be found with a finer character or a sterner sense of duty. But he is no prig. With all his appreciation of beauty and his love of books, there is something attractive and childlike about his delight in jokes and chaff and the pleasure he takes in country expeditions.

The fourth and eldest surviving son of Lord Halifax, the venerable President of the English Church Union and leading layman of the Anglo-Catholic party, Irwin has inherited the religious convictions and spiritual devotion of his father. He is the author of a *Life of John Keble*, a poet and churchman whose career and writings must have appealed strongly to him.

Before Wood went to India he was for some years a churchwarden at St. Mary's, Graham Street, where spiritual activity is combined with liturgical gymnastics. Yet there is nothing "precious" in Irwin's faith. It is strong and lively, no mere matter of forms and ceremonies. This much, indeed, he has in common with George Lloyd; and the degree of sympathy on religion and politics between these two close friends is expressed in the little book, *The Great Opportunity*, which they wrote together in the last summer of the War and which was published two years later.

Irwin is a man of exceptional charm, and the impression of sincerity which he leaves on all who come into contact with him wins him universal goodwill and respect. He has never permitted his unfortunate disability—he was born with only one hand—to embitter his cheerful though highly-strung nature or to interfere with his enjoyment of life.

He had the normal education of a young Englishman of his class. He went to Eton and Christ Church, took a first class in Modern History and was elected to a fellowship at All Souls. In 1909 he married Lady Dorothy Onslow, the youngest daughter of the late Lord Onslow. The match met with the warm approval of relations and friends on both sides. How could it be otherwise? Here were two of the most delightful people in the world; what could be more appropriate? Needless to say, they were perfectly correct, as the happiness of the Irwins' married life has proved.

In 1910 Edward Wood (as he was then) was

elected to Parliament as Unionist Member for Ripon, a seat which he held continuously until his recent appointment. He had only been in the House for four years when the War broke out, but that was time enough to enable a critical assembly to estimate and approve his powers. Nor was it any reflection upon his intellectual capacity that the solidity of his character rather than the brilliance of his brain was what impressed his colleagues.

During the War, Edward Wood served at first as a Major in the Yorkshire Dragoons, and later as Assistant Secretary to the National Service Ministry. In 1921 he became Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and in the same year he accompanied Mr. Ormsby-Gore, who was to succeed him at the Colonial Office, on a tour of the British West Indies.

In 1922 he rose to Cabinet rank, as President of the Board of Education in succession to Mr. Herbert Fisher. Following a difficult man at a difficult time, he acquitted himself well during his short period of office. After nine months of opposition, he returned in 1924 as President of the Board of Agriculture, the post, it is safe to say, which he himself would have selected, also the post which probably any other Unionist of the front bench would have done his utmost to avoid. Agriculture, we are often told, is the Cinderella of politics, but Cinderella at least knew her own mind: she wanted to go to a ball. In England to-day there is general agreement among agriculturists that something should be done, but at that point harmony ends. Far from happy, therefore, is

the plight of the Minister, sandwiched between those who do not know what they want and will not be happy till they get it, and those others who cry wistfully for a tariff which the Government has pledged itself not to impose. Few men were better qualified than Edward Wood to handle such a situation. He understands farmers and farming as well as any man in England, while his obvious sincerity is a protection against a class that is consistently and not unreasonably suspicious of politicians.

So, although many people rejoiced, the farmers were genuinely sorry when it was announced that Edward Wood had been offered and had accepted the succession to Lord Reading as Viceroy of India.

Probably few people realized how heavy a sacrifice he was making to his sense of duty and public service when he agreed to go to India. He must be separated for five years from his much-loved Garrowby and the life of the English country-side. He had a young and growing family whom it would be impossible to keep with him all the time of his exile. He had friends and interests and his new work at the Board of Agriculture; and from all these he must part, temporarily or for ever. Then there was his career. He would have been a little more than human to forget it. His feet were firmly placed on the ladder that leads upwards to the highest offices in the State, and that ladder was all at once taken away. Although, when he returns from India he will still be a comparatively young man, he will find it as hard as other ex-Viceroy have found it to take up political life again. In five

years touch is lost, and in addition something is gained—a kind of impatience, perhaps, with the workings of democracy, or a continental as opposed to an insular point of view—something, at any rate, that is a positive disadvantage in the politics of the British Isles. “The most stupid rôle in the world,” said Napoleon, “is that of exiled King;” and there is much of the exiled King about the ex-Viceroy.

We may be sure that Lord Irwin was fully aware of what he was sacrificing when the offer was made to him; but being the man he is, he chose, as someone put it, “the more dangerous and the more splendid course.”

Over here his decision was welcomed with relief. In India comment, though favourable, was more qualified. The vernacular press was inclined to be captious, but could hardly be otherwise when criticizing the appointment of a Viceroy by a Conservative Government. The *Swarajya* wrote: “A Conservative by politics, an aristocrat with a slight leaven of military service, he is just the type that can be expected to be ruthless in emergencies with the ruthlessness of the bigot, impervious to Radical influences!” It is a trifle difficult to recognize Lord Irwin in this sinister disguise.

Unlike Lord Lloyd, he went to India without any previous experience or knowledge of the East. This, it is true, may be an advantage in a country where one of the best governors made one of the worst viceroys, and where it is almost an axiom that total ignorance of land, people and customs should be the supreme ruler’s first qualification.

“The more dangerous and the more splendid course.” Certainly it was the more dangerous that he chose.

In India he succeeded to as difficult a service as any in the British Empire. Lord Reading, his immediate predecessor, had probably had an even harder task in following the inept administration of Lord Chelmsford ; but marked as was his (Lord Reading’s) success, he left the country with most of its graver problems of necessity unsolved, if indeed they had ever been soluble. It takes something more than courage to govern India to-day ; to control a semi-constitutional *régime*, suspended in some provinces, scarcely operative in others, working smoothly in none, and, with the aid of a Civil Service, loyal, industrious, but frankly incredulous, to rule a land where dyarchy is enlivened by communal rioting and sporadic non-co-operation.

Although we can call no Viceroy successful until he has gone home, there is no doubt that Lord Irwin has already won respect and esteem. Dignity, courage, candour and religious conviction are qualities which appeal at least as strongly to the Indian as to the Englishman ; and we may add to the tale that tradition of public service which is Lord Irwin’s birthright. The story of his arrival in India as Viceroy on the evening before Good Friday is well known—how he set aside all the official welcomes and deputations in order to attend the three hours’ service at Bombay Cathedral the next morning. This incident made a profound impression on Europeans as well as on the native population, an impression which was repeated

when after the service was over the Viceroy visited Gandhi and had a long talk with him on agriculture, Hindus and Moslems alike applauded his first speech, in which he dwelt upon the country's many problems, and asking, "Must British genius be forced to admit defeat in India?" declared, "Such a thing is unthinkable!"

Lord Irwin has now been Viceroy of India just over a year, and if he continues as he has begun, we may feel confident that we shall see neither the feebleness of Lord Chelmsford nor the truculence of Sir Michael O'Dwyer; neither the Byzantinism of a Curzon nor the halting Liberalism of a Hardinge. In recent years we have experimented with a Jew, a diplomat and a Territorial officer; perhaps it is as well that we are now trying an ordinary English gentleman.

## *THE ANGLO-CATHOLICS*

IN an earlier chapter\* I have attempted to picture the feelings of an early nineteenth-century statesman paying a posthumous visit to the House of Commons of 1927. Our fancy might expand so far as to introduce his contemporary from the Episcopal Bench to a modern Sunday morning service in one of our churches. I like to picture such a bishop appearing suddenly, let us say, in All Saints', Margaret Street. Naturally he would expect the old familiar spectacle: the sober rows of family worshippers; paterfamilias addressing his decorous prayers to the inside of his top hat; his wife, surrounded by expensively bound Books of Common Prayer, dividing her attention between the service, the demeanour of her offspring and—as a weak woman—the attire of her neighbours; and the minister himself—no priest, mark you!—decently apparelled in a white surplice and an Oxford hood, droning collects for interminable Sundays after Trinity.

We may guess at the scandalized feelings of our bishop as the reality confronted him: the devout young men carefully separated from the devout old women; the pictures, the images and the flowers; the chasubles of Roman cut; the candles, the incense

\* The Young Conservatives.



and the bells ; the birettas, the bowings and crossings and intonings ; and, above all, the doctoring of the familiar Communion Service into a perilous resemblance to the Roman Mass. There would, I fancy, be an agitation of lawn sleeves, a scurry of gaitered legs, and our bishop, carefully averting his eyes from the Calvary, and shying violently at the Holy Water stoup, would disappear through a cloud of incense into Margaret Street.

Speaking in terms not of years but of spirit, the Anglo-Catholics may be styled the young men of the Church of England. At home and abroad, in the Mission field and in the country parish, they are unquestionably the most vigorous body within the Church. They have the enthusiasm of youth, the impatience of youth, and even a lump of youthful mischief in their composition. They do not altogether agree among themselves about what they want, but they want it very badly and very soon. If they have many of the virtues of youth, they have also a few of the vices. They are sometimes a little impulsive and a little intolerant ; and perhaps their besetting sin is self-consciousness. To the outsider nothing is less edifying than the spectacle of a young Anglo-Catholic crossing himself or genuflecting, with one eye on the celebrant and the other on the retired Colonel of obvious Low Church propensities, who is sitting and bristling a couple of pews away. They welcome criticism, opposition, persecution—indeed anything but indifference, for they know that the more fiercely they are criticized, opposed and persecuted the faster

the converts will pour in. But with the sincerity of the fanatic they combine an impish pleasure in scandalizing the Protestant and in laying spiritual booby traps for unwary bishops. In short, they present a happy blend of Dr. Pusey and Father Ronald Knox in his pre-Roman days ; or, in terms of literature, of *Tracts for the Times* and that delicious skit, *Absolute and Abitofhell*.

Nearly a century has passed since Newman preached the first of his celebrated sermons in the University Church of Oxford, and during those years the Movement, which he first inaugurated and later abandoned, has marched on with the steadiness and purpose of a victorious army. To-day we can hardly realize that there was a time, within living memory, when what was crudely termed a " ritualistic " service was never safe from the blasphemous interruptions of hooligans ; when saintly old men like Father Maconochie and Mr. J. M. Neale were subjected to repeated insults and indignities, and even to physical violence ; when the stouter members of the congregation of St. Barnabas, Pimlico, had to stand in shifts to guard their altar from desecration ; and when slum priests, carrying on heroic and unequal warfare with destitution and squalor, and the sins that are the children of destitution and squalor, were threatened and harried with vexatious and expensive actions in Court.

To-day the Catholic rite is freely practised ; and Catholicism, though stronger among the clergy than among the laity, has reached the very core of the Church. It is true that it still has a bad Press ; that

it is inadequately represented in the upper ranks of the hierarchy ; and that the indignant Protestant still pens his protest to his bishop or his favourite newspaper. But the main positions have been captured and consolidated, and the enemy is in full retreat. Where the impetus of the assault will lead is another matter. There are those who see, afar off, a Catholic but independent Church of England, others whose horizon ends in the domes and spires of the Eternal City. Who can tell what the end of it all will be ?

Curiously enough, the recent Prayer Book controversy has disclosed in equal measure the strength and the weakness of the movement. It has shown an unwilling and, in the main, a Protestant community how firm is the Catholic footing not merely in slum and country parishes, but even in such bodies as Diocesan Conferences.

But, at the same time, it has opened a rift in the Catholic Party. To many of the older members—especially laymen—the Deposited Book was an advance that would have been incredible in an earlier generation. It gave open sanction to the use of Eucharistic vestments, provided a liturgy which was at least more in keeping with the Catholic view of the Mass than was the old Communion Service, and offered with certain restrictions general recognition of the practice of Reservation. Finally, a measure which could create such consternation among Protestants must surely, they felt, be worthy of the serious consideration of Catholics.

But to the younger men, and especially to the younger priests, such complaisance is odious. They prefer an old Book which they have never pretended to follow very closely to a new Book with which conformity may be enforced. The ordinary Churchman is not greatly exercised by their denunciations. He is unwilling to go to the stake for the Athanasian Creed, the Epiklesis leaves him unmoved, and the alleged exaltation of the powers of the bishop at the expense of the rights of the parish priest is too legal a point to disturb his peace of mind ; although in their defence of Reservation and Devotions the extremists are surer of lay support.

This second and smaller party among the Anglo-Catholics is ably represented by Prebendary Mackay, a man of scholarship and practical ability, whose leadership is handicapped by a forbidding and austere presence that, in reality, merely conceals an exquisite shyness. This party had hoped for the defeat of the Prayer Book measure in the Church Assembly. They exaggerated the voting strength of objecting Protestants. They under-estimated the authority and political acumen of the Archbishop of Canterbury, forgetting that, as Father Knox once wrote in a famous limerick, "Randall was always a wary 'un." The measure passed, and in passing placed the extremists in a very awkward position. They were between the devil of the Deposited Book and the deep sea of Parliamentary interference. Adoption of the Alternative Book might place the Church in a state of heresy ; but rejection by Parliament would be rank Erastianism.

Probably the alarm of the extremists is ungrounded. As a nation we are rather fond of setting up legislative barriers and then showing how easy it is to drive a coach and four through them. With us—strange, illogical folk that we are—fact is generally far less formidable than theory, and we have a positive genius for combining the two when they are entirely inconsistent with each other. I doubt, therefore, whether the Deposited Book is really charged with all these hidden dangers that have been imputed to it ; whether, indeed, it will make very much difference to the Church in either direction. The Catholic Movement will go on much as before, because nothing can stop it. The Protestants will continue to protest, because protesting is their business. But that there will be any general attempt to compel uniformity by persecution is unthinkable, if only for the reason that some 800 Catholic priests cannot be expelled from their livings when there is no one to take their place.

But if the era of criticism has succeeded that of persecution, even to-day there is one quarter where an attempt is being made to rekindle the dying fires. That quarter is Birmingham, where the self-appointed Grand Inquisitor is the egregious Dr. Barnes, the first, and, I think, the only episcopal appointment made by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, and quite the worst made by any Prime Minister in recent years. It is said that Mr. MacDonald submitted Dr. Barnes' name in a moment of pique, because the Archbishop of Canterbury had objected to his first suggestion on the ground that the diocese of Birmingham demanded

some qualifications supplementary to an avowed sympathy with the Labour Party. The story, if correct, does little credit to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, who had no business to use his spiritual opportunities either to promote his political partisans or to further his vendettas. His error has given fresh edge to the weapons of those who are attacking the anomalous but characteristically British arrangement by which a Nonconformist or an agnostic may control the appointment of bishops. The Prime Minister, it is true, can scarcely nominate Jews or Turks, but it certainly seems that the Church is inadequately protected against infidels and heretics.

Dr. Barnes is a man of experience and scholarship, and that is about all that can be said in his favour. Before this Right Reverend Father in Christ had been in his new office a year, he was at open war with some fourteen churches in his diocese, and out of sympathy, it is safe to assume, with at least as many more. His *casus belli*, chosen with strange ineptitude, was the Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, a practice conditionally allowed by his predecessor in Birmingham, and so allowed to-day in neighbouring dioceses. It only remains to add that whatever his conduct of this controversy may have lacked in business sense, it fully made up for with an *odium theologicum* of a kind from which of late years the Church has been happily free.

Latterly he has carried his campaign beyond the borders of his diocese, and in a succession of sermons set himself deliberately to affront the deepest

convictions of the majority of his fellow-Churchmen. After assuming, quite erroneously, that the Church of England was a hotbed of what Americans call "fundamentalism," he turned his attention and attacks to the Blessed Sacrament. Nor did the dignified public rebuke administered by the Archbishop of Canterbury avail to check the wagging of his intemperate tongue. It is a pity that his position in the Church should invest his outbursts with such publicity, for although a mathematician of repute, his theology is almost childish.

Really, if it is essential to recognize the gifts of a man like Dr. Barnes, it is a pity that we cannot imitate the Roman practice of creating bishops *in partibus infidelium*, whose nominal see may be Lhasa or Erzerum, or some other remote and heathen spot which they need not even be able to find on the map, but whose actual residence remains unchanged. So Dr. Barnes, while continuing to enjoy the amenities of a Canon of Westminster, might have been *episcopatus* with a minimum of disagreeable consequences; and if eventually the temptation to deport him to his distant diocese proved too strong to be resisted, we could always console ourselves with the reflection that he would feel perfectly at home there.

The Anglo-Catholics, of course, are the last people who should complain of Dr. Barnes. Nowadays the British people will tolerate almost anything but intolerance. A pinch of persecution is worth a ton of propaganda, and the bishop, quite involuntarily, has created a boom in Anglo-Catholicism throughout the Midlands.

It is well for the Movement that it derives occasional assistance from people like Dr. Barnes, because of recent years—indeed since the death of Pusey—there has been a strange lack of leadership, or, more correctly perhaps, of leaders. Its battles have been Inkermans, its local commanders men of the rank and file, of whom until his death shortly before the War, the most prominent was Father Stanton, a simple parish priest. This is the more curious, since from time to time there have been men who appeared marked out to lead the Movement. There was, for instance, the late Bishop of Zanzibar, who would probably have been acceptable to all sections, but who would undoubtedly have found the East Coast of Africa an exceedingly inconvenient G.H.Q. There is—I had almost said there was—Bishop Gore. He is a scholar, a charming personality, a saint; and perhaps for these reasons he is not a leader. The Church has never been divided into those who were ready to die in the last ditch with him and those who would rather not be seen under the same roof with him. He is no extremist. He likes his lonely furrow. He has too much intellectual honesty to swallow conclusions against which his sense of scholarship warns him. He is inclined perhaps to stress the first two syllables of Anglo-Catholicism, while others are laying all the emphasis on the last four. So he is now a little out of tune with these others, and they—these younger men—rather venerate him as a tradition or as a source of inspiration, than recognize in him any special authority.

The third obvious candidate is Lord Halifax,



undoubtedly the first Catholic layman in the country, and a survivor of the Homeric ecclesiastical controversies of the last century. But probably the fact that he *is* a layman has been his disqualification for heading a party which necessarily exalts the order of priesthood.

So the leadership remains in commission, and if, in the absence of leaders, I were asked to indicate the most representative of the younger men, there are two names which, for widely different reasons, suggest themselves to me. The first is that of Maurice Child, officially a curate at St. Mary's, Graham Street—the Garm Street Church, as the unkind critic has labelled it. His curacy, however, is the least significant of his duties, and his real headquarters is a large office in Victoria Street, where he directs the activities of that rather mysterious body, the Anglo-Catholic Congress Committee. That office is the heart and brain of the Catholic Movement. From it proceed all the schemes and ventures, the pilgrimages and propagandist campaigns, the Missions and Fiery Cross Crusades, which are carrying the Movement forward.

Few people, meeting Father Child casually, would place him as the organizing genius behind these multitudinous operations. They would see a round little, plump little, young man, with twinkling eyes, a beaming smile, a ribald tongue, and a general air of comfortable living; the kind of man, you would say at first sight, who would make a great success as curate in a wealthy suburban parish; who would be rather useful at the vicar's tennis parties; who would chaff

the young men into intimacy with plenty of slang; who would flirt innocuously with the young ladies; who would be addressed as "Padre" and voted a good fellow; and who would end by making an entirely suitable marriage with the daughter of a City knight.

But how wide of the mark you would be! As you got to know him a little better, you would revise your judgment. You would place him, perhaps, in the school of Ronald Knox, where outward flippancy blends with inward fervour, and a host of unsuspected abilities lies ambushed behind a debonair manner. Or perhaps you would recognize his prototype in the Papal statesman of the later Middle Ages, the Monsignor suave but shrewd, in appearance a complete man of the world, and in fact a very hard-working son of the Church. And a rather closer view of Maurice Child may then lead you on to uneasy speculation. What exactly, you wonder, is he up to now? Is he really the author of that slightly sinister article which appeared the other day (under a pseudonym) in the *Church Times*? How much truth underlies those naughty rumours of a private wire between Abbey House and the Vatican, and of visits, heavily cloaked, to important dignitaries of the Roman Church? Not much, perhaps, but just enough to surround his activities with a slightly Jesuitical atmosphere.

His sudden appearances alarm you. He flits incessantly between St. Mary's, his office in Victoria Street, and Pusey House at Oxford; and when you

believe him safely established in London you may one day find him scurrying about the borders of Europe and Asia Minor, with an inscrutable smile and no obvious purpose. He is like a character in *John Inglesant*, and three hundred years ago he would surely have been burnt or hanged as a highly suspicious person, against whom nothing could be proved but who was better out of the way.

In the end you will abandon conjecture as futile, and accept him for what he is, a delightful and witty companion. But you will not, I think, again make the mistake of underrating either his abilities or his importance in the Catholic Movement.

My other selection is a very different person, Father Vernon. If Father Child is Martha, much occupied with mundane details of organization, Father Vernon is Mary. He scarcely belongs to this world; he does not accept its standards of value, its conventions or its habits. He is a member of an Anglican Order, the Society of the Divine Compassion, and no one who knows him can doubt his vocation. He lives in complete poverty, so that if you write to him and want an answer, it is as well to enclose a stamped addressed envelope. He is very simple, very natural, very youthful in appearance. Dressed in his long black habit, secured by a white girdle, he tramps abstractedly about London as though it were a mediæval Italian town. He will spend a morning at the humblest of work in Stamford-le-Hope or Plaistow, and the afternoon having tea with a member of the Royal Family; and in both circles he is perfectly at home. He says

just what he thinks, and, subject to the Rule of his Society, does very much what he likes. He will arrive suddenly at your house, and if he has a shabby black sack slung over his shoulder, you will probably ask him to spend the night with you. At least he will lunch or dine, and after the meal you would not be surprised if he walked off with one of your coats or a pair of shoes, required for some charitable object he has just remembered. He is never shy, or formal, or reserved, or diffident. Directly he is introduced to a man he begins to talk to him as though he has known him all his life; and after five minutes he will start ragging him, sometimes rather to the other's embarrassment. For with him there is no half-way house to complete friendship, nor anyone from whom he would withhold his, except, perhaps, those tiresome emotional women who make a persecution out of their penitence. With the young of both sexes, especially, he has inexhaustible sympathy and patience.

He is one of the most effective preachers in the Church of England, and in this respect, more than any other man, he has succeeded Father Stanton. Whether he is giving a course of sermons at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, or conducting a mission in Liverpool, there are the same crowds, the same queues of disappointed people who have to be turned away for lack of room. His extraordinary success baffles analysis. It does not, I think, lie in the substance of his sermons, which print converts into candid, colloquial addresses, distinguished by no great profundity or originality of thought, and lacking in the oratorical

graces. It is the personality of the man that counts ; that, and the humour which is always darting to the surface ; and a burning belief in the message to be delivered. I remember being present a year or two ago at the anniversary meeting of the Anglo-Catholic Congress at the Albert Hall. The place was pretty full. The usual bishops and eminent laymen had given the usual more or less controversial addresses, punctuated by the hymns, the laughter and the applause which the occasion seemed to demand. The last speaker was Father Vernon. He uttered not a word of ecclesiastical "politics." His subject, I believe, was the Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, a clean leap to a level far removed from that of the preceding speeches. And that mighty hall was hushed into a silence so profound that it was as though a voice were speaking in the solitude of a great and empty space.

I have always thought that incident rather significant. It is characteristic of Father Vernon, as it is of many of the younger Anglo-Catholics, that the old battles have come to mean very little to them. They take for granted the victories of the earlier generation. The trench-lines are still there, the twisted strands of rusted wire, the debris of equipment, the shell-holes, the blasted trees, the shattered houses, and even the poor remains of the fallen. But the battle has passed into the far distance, and—there is work for them to do on the battlefield.

That is Father Vernon's great task. The Movement has secured a firm foothold within the Church, and

that is good. It has yet to conquer the layman. Society, as Father Vernon sees it, is sick unto death. "The heart of the world," he declares, "is a broken heart." Everywhere men and women are baffled and beaten by life. They have lost the old faith, and three and a half centuries of Protestantism have given them nothing that can take its place. They seek happiness and find pleasure; and when pleasure turns to the bitterness of Dead Sea fruit they exclaim in their despair that happiness is unattainable. Yet it is all so simple, really. Let them turn back and travel the older road. There is the Mass—and there is Confession; and when Father Vernon talks of Confession you feel that to him it is the root of the whole matter, that lacking this, Catholicism is thwarted and incomplete. The doctrine is easy neither for others to accept nor for him to preach; for those young people, whom he particularly seeks, may come in crowds to listen to him, but dwindle to a discouraging remnant before the door of the Confessional.

The future alone can tell whether this obstacle can be surpassed; whether the ingrained spiritual reticence of the average Briton and his traditional—and not altogether unwholesome—suspicion of priestcraft can be overcome; or whether indeed this Catholic Movement in the Church of England is but a vain attempt to hark back

*"to the watchfires and stars that of old  
Shone where the sky now is black,  
Glowed where the earth now is cold."*

## EPILOGUE

*Posters and Post-mortems—Witch-doctors—Lycidas—  
And yet more Women—Borrowed Ministers—Conclusion.*

### POSTERS AND POST-MORTEMES

AFTER four and a half years they produced a poster. It was very large. It displayed a face and a slogan. It broke out like a rash on every hoarding. It was designed to soothe and encourage a number of elderly and nervous people who had never in their lives voted for anyone but a Conservative; and it left out of account some millions of young women to whom the Conservative Government in a moment of absent-mindedness had promised, and in a mood of chivalry had accorded, the privilege of the vote. The generation that rides on pillions is as unlikely to be won by Mr. Baldwin's slogan as by Mr. Baldwin's face.

The Central Office has been blamed. That was only to be expected. The Party Organization exists to be forgotten in prosperity and to be a scapegoat in adversity. But the Central Office was not the only culprit. The poster, I understand, came up for the inspection of the Cabinet. It was considered, criticized, admired, and finally approved as an election winner by the Fathers of Conservatism themselves, so assured of plenary inspiration that they did not trouble

to consult the younger men who might have told them a different story.

Scharnhorst, it is true, was confident, Scharnhorst being Mr. J. C. C. Davidson, Chairman of the Party Organization since December, 1926. Plump, sandy, spectacled, breezy, Scharnhorst is clever, but not always wise. He does not look before he leaps, and he leaps with the frequency of the wallaby. Some years ago Mr. Bonar Law discovered him at the Colonial Office, carried him along to the Treasury, and finally persuaded him into a political career. The original combination was excellent: presumably, Mr. Bonar Law did the looking, and Mr. Davidson the leaping.

As henchman to Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Davidson displayed some valuable qualities. Fertile in expedient, vigorous in action, clear-headed in administration, he was an admirable Parliamentary Private Secretary, and indeed rather more than that. Yet at the Conservative Central Office he has never quite found his feet. He has ruled with energy, but his experiments—which are numerous—frequently are launched on an impulse and founder in sudden storm. Like that other Conservative leader, Mr. Amery, his brains are better than his judgment; and although he was born in Aberdeen he has not yet discovered the value of caninness. He talks too much, both in public and private, often to the dismay of his friends and to the delight of the enemy. His reign at the Central Office has been marked by some unfortunate tactical errors, which have tended to obscure the really excellent work of organization carried out under



his direction. No Party at the last election was so efficiently supplied with powder and shot as were the Conservatives by their Central Office ; and if the merit of Mr. Davidson's professional stump-orators was doubtful, and his intelligence service was sometimes at fault, there can be no cavil at the supply of information—punctual, up-to-date and reasonably accurate—which morning after morning reached candidates and speakers in every part of the country.

Mr. Davidson is a man of only forty. He is young enough—and Scotsman enough—to learn from his past mistakes. He is personally popular. He has plenty of self-confidence and abounding energy. He has had his Jena. He may yet have his Leipzig.

But when this has been said, a failure in window-dressing remains to be explained ; although this is a complaint to be addressed more properly to the leaders of the Party than to its servants at the Central Office. The failure was largely a matter of the time-table. The fulfilment of the Derating Bill was likely to be greater than its promise, the promise of Widows' Pensions to be more attractive than their fulfilment. An astute tactician like Mr. Lloyd George would have reversed the order of their appearance. In 1925 he would already have been thinking of the incitements of his shop window in 1929. To say that the Conservative leaders are poor tacticians is a compliment to their hearts but not to their heads. The fact remains that had their two principal measures changed places in the calendar—or, at any rate, had Derating come in 1926 and the Pensions in 1928—

Conservatives might have been able to point on the one hand to a revival of trade, and on the other hand to rows of prospectively endowed widows. Such a rearrangement, it may be answered, would have been impracticable: the details of Derating could not have been ready by 1926, and the Widows' Pensions, if left over to the period of straitened finances that followed the General Strike, would never have been carried at all. Possibly; but these are difficulties of a kind which successful ministers have always encountered and have often overcome. As it was, the widows forgot to be grateful,\* and the benefits of Derating, obscured—wilfully in some quarters—by confusion with the Rating Valuation Act, became a promise as unsubstantial as any of Mr. Lloyd George's. How many candidates, in their dejection, fell back upon Safeguarding, only to discover that the industries in their constituencies either did not want or could not get a duty! Otherwise there was so little to talk about. Labour, wisely, was lying low and saying as little as possible about what they meant to do, and as much as possible about what their opponents had not done. To attack Mr. Lloyd George and the the Liberals was to battle with a stage army. There was no Zinoviev Letter. "Let me once more endeavour to explain the Derating Bill," said the weary Conservative candidate, and the hall emptied. And on polling day, "Who stole the children's milk?" proved a better slogan than "Safety First."

\*The Act was ringed about with qualifications and exceptions. As one candidate put it sadly, "I haven't yet found a widow who *is* getting a pension."

## WITCH DOCTORS

Those of us who are acquainted with the works of the late Sir Henry Rider Haggard are familiar with the profession of the witch-doctor. When war, famine, or any of those disasters described by Insurance Companies with unconscious blasphemy as Acts of God, have visited the tribe, the Matabele or Basuto, unversed in the philosophy of the actuary, makes a determined attempt to smell out the culprit. The tribe is assembled, the witch-doctors appear with the paraphernalia of their calling, and in due course some entirely innocent person is marked down and sent to a painful death. The practice, convenient as it has been found in South Africa, seems to have its attraction even in this country for a political party in the hour of defeat. Almost as soon as the General Election was over, the witch-doctors of the Conservative Party began a great smelling.

The first to enter the tribal ring was that scarred veteran "A. A. B." Mr. Arthur Baumann (to give him his name), once Editor of the *Saturday Review*, was himself in Parliament for a short time during the 'nineties. He is persuaded that no good thing has come out of the Conservative Party since the death of the late Lord Salisbury, and during the last quarter of a century he has found a gloomy satisfaction in reiterated prognostications of evil for the Party, the Country and the Empire. Before even Polling Day had dawned his Reproaches had begun. Defeat? Of course we would be defeated. What could we

expect with such a leader as Mr. Stanley Baldwin? Why had the flappers been given votes? Why were we fighting on two fronts when with a little diplomacy and a few minor concessions the Liberal Party might have been ranged on our side, Socialism defeated, the world made safe for—for—— And it is when we try to discover the frontiers of “A. A. B.’s” Utopia that our footsteps falter. We envisage a frozen England of *fin de siècle*, with the bells of Jubilee ringing, and the old Queen at Cowes, and Consols at par, and men of property at a premium, and Nestor at Downing Street. Otherwise, ruin, disaster, damnation, presided over by poor, stupid, honest Mr. Baldwin or that dangerous revolutionary Mr. Ramsay MacDonald.

Having said his part with the melancholy confidence of one of the older Forsytes, “A. A. B.” makes way for a doctor of even greater authority and more pontifical manner. He, too, pronounces once a week: he, too, is splendidly confident of disaster. Mr. Baldwin wrong? Of course he is; but then so is almost everybody. If only sound advice had been taken! If only people would recognize the authentic voice of Jeremiah! If only the *Observer* were to be seen among the sausages and marmalade of every Sunday breakfast-table in the land! For there—and there only—may salvation be found, in column after column of counsel that is never taken and vaticination that is always justified and generally follows the event.

The next doctor is more lively. He enters the tribal ring with a hop, skip and jump, and after dancing lightly

round it once, flicks his whisk of elephant's tail into the astonished face of Mr. Davidson of the Central Office. Here, says Mr. Amery, is the crux of the matter—bad publicity. Our goods were excellent, but we did not know how to sell them. And although, when subsequently taxed with his indictment, Mr. Amery murmured that he must not be taken too seriously, a great many of the tribesmen found more wisdom in his jests than in Mr. Garvin's thunders.

Lastly, we have had the medicine-man from North America. He at least has a remedy, even if it is only of the quack order. The tribe must return to the gods of its fathers. There was Joseph Chamberlain; there was Bonar Law; and at that last name the skull-cap is reverently lifted, because the day has never been forgotten when Mr. Bonar Law discovered Sir Max Aitken, and Sir Max Aitken discovered Mr. Bonar Law. Somewhere, in the recesses of the tribal pantheon, is the good old god Food-taxer. Taken off his shelf, dusted, given a lick of fresh paint and a new label—Free Trade within the Empire—he is almost as good as ever he was in the days of old. On the appearance of this familiar deity, some of the tribesmen even began to shout, but when the Conservative majority at Twickenham fell from 6,000 in May to 500 in August, the applause gave place to recrimination.

Nevertheless, the good old god is out of his cupboard and his impresario is quite impenitent.

It takes more than a by-election to dam the Beaverbrook.

## LYCIDAS

When we have finished with posters and post-mortems and witch-doctors, the ugly fact remains that the casualties among the Conservative Party were heaviest among those young men who could least be spared.

Mr. Duff Cooper, bereft of Liberal support, was defeated at Oldham by a gentleman who has the unique distinction of being at once a Nonconformist minister and a near relative of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Captain Harold Macmillan went down fighting at Stockton-on-Tees. Reading obeyed the voice of the late Viceroy of India and rejected Mr. H. G. Williams. Mr. O'Connor at Luton, Mr. Hudson at Whitehaven and Captain Geoffrey Peto at Frome have all lost seats which are traditionally Liberal or Labour. While the railwaymen of Swindon, ignoring Mr. Lloyd George's warning that he had dismissed Dr. Addison from the Ministry of Health because he had been incompetent, preferred him to that wittiest of barristers Sir Reginald Mitchell Banks.

“ How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,  
Anow of such as for their bellies sake  
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold. ”

While the ranks of the Y.M.C.A. have been decimated, the Forty Thieves can still muster a round number. They are entrenched in the safe seats of the south and west, and are not to be shifted. Let the restless spirits of the Party go out and do battle

in the industrial north and midlands, in Red Scotland and Nonconformist Wales. Such adventures are not for men of substance and comfortable habit.

Unfortunately, the men of substance and comfortable habit, though useful in a modest way as silent members of a great majority, are ineffective in Opposition. So that it comes to this: that in a Conservative Parliament, when the industrial boroughs have swung to the Right, the young men are in and are scarcely wanted; while in a Labour or Liberal Parliament, when the industrial boroughs have swung back to the Left, the young men are wanted and are not in. The dilemma has already occurred to Mr. Baldwin. The Central Office is unpleasantly familiar with it. It is now commended to the Local Conservative Associations, with whom, and with whom alone, the solution ultimately lies.

With so many casualties among the young men, the survivors are as welcome as the wreck of a regiment that has been over the top. Major Oliver Stanley, Captain Eden, Captain Gunston and Mr. Boothby are among the more promising *revenants*. Released from their Parliamentary Private Secretaryships, they can ride their activities with a loose rein. Mr. Boothby, who increased his majority for a difficult constituency in Aberdeenshire, has already distinguished himself by his vigour in debate. He crossed swords with Mr. J. H. Thomas to such purpose that that most genial of ministers was driven to spiteful repartee. Mr. Boothby, in criticizing Mr. Thomas's schemes for the reduction of unemployment, was incautious

enough to refer to "my experience at the Treasury." Mr. Thomas, in reply, gave an imaginative account of the duties of Parliamentary Private Secretaries in general and of the satellite of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer in particular. It appeared from his remarks that Mr. Boothby's principal duty at the Treasury had been to keep Mr. Winston Churchill adequately supplied with liquid refreshment. He was, said Mr. Thomas, a mere doorkeeper. These sallies were received with distaste by numbers of serious-minded gentlemen who were sitting behind Mr. Thomas and had just been appointed Parliamentary Private Secretaries to Labour ministers. But the last laugh was with Mr. Boothby, who rose and reminded the House that King David had once declared that he would "rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

To this retort—incidentally an astonishing tribute to Mr. Winston Churchill—no answer was returned.

The young Conservatives who have survived the election now have their opportunity. Minority governments are short-lived. Sooner, perhaps, than Mr. Garvin fears there will be a change; and in the next Conservative Government the fruits of office can hardly be withheld from those who have borne the burden of debate in Opposition. Let them remember that they are the irregular cavalry. They may become a nuisance to Army Headquarters; they may even be repudiated by authority, as in its day the Fourth Party was repudiated by Mr. Smith;



but let them press the enemy hard enough and they will have their reward when the battle is won.

#### AND YET MORE WOMEN

If in the last Parliament feminism was a small cloud on the horizon, in the new Parliament it is beginning to threaten a storm. The Conservatives, it is true, merely return with their three peeresses and without Mrs. Hilton Philipson, who retired to domesticity and the new Galsworthy play, named, so appropriately, *Exiled*. They nearly lost Lady Astor too, for an unwelcome Liberal candidate appeared at Plymouth and a majority of 2,676 dwindled to 211. But Lady Astor is back, and Parliament would be a duller place without her. Already she has had the worst of an encounter with Miss Susan Lawrence, while an exchange of amenities with Mr. Jack Jones was terminated by the member for Silvertown informing the House that he was a better man drunk than was Lady Astor sober—a statement containing more than one daring implication.

The deficiency of Mabel Russell has been more than made good by reinforcements to the Labour Party. Four ladies went out, and nine return. Of Miss Margaret Bondfield I have written in an earlier chapter. Once a packer, then a dressmaker's assistant, she is now Minister of Labour and the first woman to sit in a Cabinet. Her promotion was deserved. Although in the Parliament of 1923-4, when she was Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry, she showed no striking aptitude for administration, she

is shrewd, resourceful and effective in debate. She is too sensible to mislead herself with shibboleths, and too courageous to let herself be stamped by the extremists of her own Party. She knows at least as much about the work of her Department as did her predecessor, Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland, and in the Cabinet her counsel will have a ready hearing.

Miss Susan Lawrence is Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Health. During the debates on the Derating Bill in the last Parliament she was almost the only member of the Labour Party who understood the measure sufficiently to criticize it intelligently. She is the opposite number to Sir Kingsley Wood, with whom she periodically does battle; and like him, she is dreadfully unerring on facts and figures in dispute. She is combative and prejudiced, and her omniscience, which is a little irritating, makes her a dangerous person to provoke. When Lady Astor let fall some loose remarks in depreciation of the West Ham Guardians, the member for East Ham North at once took her to task; and the House was amused by the spectacle of a lady who is rather too fond of lecturing other people being herself lectured by one of her own sex (kindly, firmly and in kindergarten style) on the correct use of the English language.

Intellectually akin to Miss Susan Lawrence are Dr. Marion Phillips and Dr. Ethel Bentham. Dr. Phillips was born in Australia and is an authority on the Poor Law. Dr. Bentham is a Quaker, a Justice of the Peace and a member of the Metropolitan

Asylums Board, with plenty of experience of local government. For many years both she and Dr. Phillips have been active members of the Labour Party. They are virtuous and just a little dull.

Miss Ellen Wilkinson (Red Ellen) returns as member for East Middlesbrough. She has lived and learned since she first went to Westminster, which is about as much as can be said for her fiery little colleague, Miss Jenny Lee from Lanarkshire, the youngest woman in the House. In the last Parliament Miss Lee was a portent. She was the flapper triumphant, not merely voting but voted for and actually elected. In her efforts to live up to the part she was inclined to be shrill and self-conscious; and even when she had nothing particular to say, she insisted on saying it. The House was first intrigued, then disappointed, and finally bored, an emotional gamut not unusual in its reactions to freak members. In the new Parliament, however, having ceased to be a novelty, Miss Lee has shown glimmerings of better things.

Miss Picton-Turbervill is a much-travelled lady, with a Norman ancestor and a wide experience of the Young Women's Christian Association; and Mrs. Mary Hamilton, who won a striking victory at Blackburn, is a well-known novelist and reviewer, whose voice is already familiar to literary patrons of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

Last and most attractive is Lady Cynthia Mosley, the wife of Egalité and daughter of Lord Curzon. She captured Stoke from that militant navvy, Colonel John Ward. Young, accomplished, beautiful, and

very rich, she has inherited something of her father's gift for affairs, but with conjugal piety has adopted wholesale the Socialist convictions of her husband. I am informed that at the famous "Sabine Farm," their country house in Buckinghamshire, one of the windows contains a triptych panel. In the centre are the initials of Sir Oswald and Lady Cynthia, on the right are the hammer and sickle of revolution, and on the left the letters £ s. d. upside down. But Lady Cynthia herself might be taken to represent the Mosley *motif* even better, and surely more attractively.

The Liberals put up a large number of women candidates at the election, but with a solitary exception they were defeated. The exception was Miss Megan Lloyd George, who, I understand, appealed to the electors of Anglesey to return her to Parliament in order that she might look after her father. The electors apparently found the request reasonable. Miss Megan will doubtless perform the duties for which she was returned; so far she has given little indication of a capacity for doing much more.

#### BORROWED MINISTERS

The transition is easy from Lady Cynthia Mosley to Egalité himself. It is also, when we are casting an eye over Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Cabinet, appropriate, for the appointment of Sir Oswald Mosley to the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster is one of the most interesting experiments in the new Parliament. When a Labour Government was seen

to be inevitable, rumour at once began to take liberties with Sir Oswald Mosley's name. He was to be an Under-Secretary. He was to follow Lord Irwin to India. He was to go to the Foreign Office. He was to get nothing at all. His actual post was not, I fancy, foreseen.

The Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster may be anything or nothing. It may be a starting-point; but more usually it is a shelf on which the discarded politician is left to repose in dignified idleness. (During the War Mr. Winston Churchill had not held it for many months when he reminded Mr. Asquith that he held the King's commission and that his regiment was on active service overseas.) But latterly the office has often been bestowed on someone whom it is desired to include in the Cabinet and for whom no other post is available. Such a minister then resembles a bishop *in partibus infidelium*. No activity is expected of him in his nominal department, but he is liable to have thrust upon him a variety of duties which have nothing whatever to do with the Duchy of Lancaster.

Sir Oswald Mosley was avowedly appointed in order that he might assist Mr. J. H. Thomas in his schemes for the conquest of unemployment. The opportunity presented is not without its dangers. If Mr. Thomas is successful, his will be the lion's share of the credit, though there will be a little reflected glory for an energetic subordinate. If Mr. Thomas is unsuccessful, there will be a scapegoat—and it is just possible that the scapegoat will not be Mr. Thomas.

Egalité, being a young man of ambition and courage, presumably decided that the chance was worth the risk.

He has already shown his paces in the new House of Commons, and it must be owned that he has carried himself well. There was an unfortunate slip over some figures—(75 million pounds, when the House came to think of it, was a great deal of money to spend on extensions to Liverpool Street Station). Apart from this lapse, he spoke with skill to a difficult brief. He has already acquired quite a good ministerial manner, and is more effective and much more likeable in defence than in attack. During the last Parliament he suffered from poor health, which was perhaps more fortunate for him than might be supposed, for it kept him out of mischief. That is to say, he was prevented from excessive vituperation and from embroiling himself overmuch in intrigues with the different sections of his Party. Through phlebitis, prudence, or a new disposition, he lay low. He ceased to coquette with Clydeside. He made friends with Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, whom he accompanied on a visit to Vienna. He matured his plans, which came to so brilliant a success last May, for tearing a great breach in the old Unionist stronghold of Birmingham.

I started this book by writing sharply of him. I will end it by wishing him such luck as he may deserve. Many a man who has risen to eminence and great service in public life has looked back to his beginnings with distaste and a faint wonder. Egalité, as much as anyone, has a right to sow his wild oats.

Sir Oswald Mosley was a forced loan from the Conservative Party, but in the late muster of his resources Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has drawn more largely from Liberalism. For instance, the election was hardly over when we had the diverting episode of Sir William Jowitt.

On the evening of May 29th the Liberals of Preston were singing the following inspiring chorus to the tune of "Tipperary":

"It's the right way to vote for Jowitt,  
It's the wise thing to do.  
He's the best man to send to Parliament,  
He's a Liberal through and through. . . ."

Within a week of the declaration of the poll they learnt that the "Liberal through and through" was to be Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's Attorney-General. We know the sequel—how the Prime Minister and his latest recruit exchanged unctuous letters; how the columns of the Press disclosed that the art of the political squib is not yet dead; how Sir William drew on his head grave reproofs from the elder brethren of his profession; and how the Liberals of Preston, after a period of agonizing uncertainty, decided that the part of *mari* more or less *complaisant* was the least undignified rôle open to them.

No one, surely, but a man of iron nerve would have chosen a friendly meal at his leader's country residence as the occasion for breaking to him the news that he had joined not only the Party but the Cabinet of the enemy. That unusual banquet conjures up all sorts of possibilities in the way of table talk. We can picture Sir William speaking:

“By the way, I did mention, did I not, that I have been thinking of joining the Labour Party? Yes, it came to me suddenly, quite suddenly. And are these asparagus out of your garden too? Delicious, delicious. Yes, in fact I think that you should know that Ramsay—no, no more, thank you, really—what was I saying?—that Ramsay wants me to come in as his Attorney. Strawberries *are* late this year, aren’t they? Yes, comfort both of mind and soul.”

It is to be feared that the reality was not so piquant, but the result was plain and fore-ordained. The Welsh Wizard, his spells all spent, was left on the doorstep by the parting guest. Perhaps, in the bitterness of his bereavement, he recalled an event of nearly twelve years earlier. “Had Zimri peace who slew his master?”

The new Attorney-General’s action was neither so cynical nor so unprincipled as his late leader may have supposed or as his severest critics made out. He has always been a left-wing Liberal. At the Hartlepools, and again at Preston, he attacked the Conservatives relentlessly, and the Labour Party hardly at all. He voted in the minority in the division on the Campbell case which dismissed Mr. MacDonald’s first Government in 1924. He has always professed sympathy with the aspirations of Labour, and in return has received Labour support, even when, as at the Hartlepools in 1924, a Labour candidate was standing against him; and both in 1923 and 1924 there were rumours of his conversion. Moreover, his letter to Mr. MacDonald was a



masterpiece, for in it he committed himself to no policy that he had not already preached. He is not a Socialist, so that his difficulties may begin if ever "Socialism in our time" ceases to be a prayer and becomes a practical project. "If you mean by Socialism," he said, "that every single industry of this country—shipbuilding, shipowning, or whatever it may be—is to be run by the State, well, anybody who believes in that ought to be in a madhouse."

That can hardly have been the sentiment recalled by the Prime Minister when he promised his prospective Attorney-General "pleasant companionship" and "comfort both of mind and soul."

That Sir William Jowitt should have joined the Labour Party need shock no one. That he should have joined it when and how he did is his true offence. It is our peculiar sense of what is fitting that prompts the foreigner to tax us with hypocrisy; but the sense persists, and on it Sir William trampled without apparently any feeling of outrage or shame.

Ethics apart, his accession to office is to be welcomed, for he is generally acknowledged to be one of the most brilliant men at the Bar. In the first Labour Government the law appointments were deplorably weak. Sir Henry Slessor was an interesting mediævalist with a reputation in Trade Union cases and few qualifications to be Solicitor-General—and fewer, people have been unkind enough to add, to be a Lord of Appeal. Sir Patrick Hastings, as Attorney-General, blundered his Party out of office and himself out of public life. The

Lord Advocate for Scotland was not a politician at all and not even a member of the Labour Party. The appointment of Sir William Jowitt is one of half a dozen which make the present Cabinet a very much stronger combination than the *fainéants* of 1924.

If I may add the name of one other man who, although no longer young, has his reputation to make, it would be that of Captain Wedgwood Benn.

He is a brother of Sir Ernest Benn the publisher ; but whereas Sir Ernest has moved from Liberalism, through Individualist Luncheons and the Individualist Bookshop, to a qualified support of Mr. Baldwin, Captain Wedgwood Benn, from the same starting-point, has reached the office of Secretary of State for India in Mr. MacDonald's Cabinet. He is a man of fifty-two and has been in Parliament almost continuously since 1910. In 1927 he declared his conversion to Labour and resigned his seat. He was, however, too valuable a man to be left out in the cold, and in the following year, when a vacancy occurred in North Aberdeen, he was chosen by the local Labour Party to fill it.

During the War he had a stirring record, first as yeoman and then as airman ; his most distinguished exploit being in January 1917 when H.M.S. *Ben-My-Chree* was sunk by the Turks, and Benn went off in a boat under heavy shell-fire to bring in the survivors. He won a D.S.O. and a D.F.C., and returned to politics in 1918, when he pursued Mr. Lloyd George with a remorseless vendetta. He continued to be a "Wee Free" Liberal even after

the breaches in his Party had outwardly been repaired, and it may be hazarded that his conversion to Labour was due as much to antipathy to his leader and the famous Fund as to a new-found sympathy with the Labour Party.

He is a stout-hearted little man and a good speaker, with a gift for acrimonious invective. He has the business acumen of his family, with just a little of their facility for espousing outlandish causes with immense enthusiasm. But he manages to combine it with plenty of common sense, and Babujee, who thinks that there is a good time coming, may end by regretting the insouciance of Lord Birkenhead and the somnolence of Lord Peel.

#### CONCLUSION

This at least we can predict of the new Parliament—that it will offer at the same time greater opportunities and more dangerous pitfalls for the young men than they could hope for from its predecessor. The pitfalls, of course, follow the opportunities. As we have already discovered, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has been more daring or more fortunate than Mr. Baldwin. He has left Buggins on the back bench and has filled his offices with newer talent. Perhaps he inherited fewer liabilities than Mr. Baldwin. At any rate he has shown more enterprise in cutting his losses and in developing fresh assets. So Mr. Lees Smith becomes Postmaster-General and Sir James Melville Solicitor-General. Lord De La Warr, once a pacifist

with the courage of his convictions, becomes Under-Secretary of State for War, Dr. Drummond Shiels for India, Mr. Dalton for Foreign Affairs. Mr. MacDonald is resolved to take at least one opportunity which Mr. Baldwin lost.

The Liberals, small as are their numbers, are a fighting nucleus ; and if only they can make up their minds all to vote occasionally in the same lobby, they may make themselves felt. The legion of ex-undergraduates whom they let loose on the rural constituencies were slaughtered almost to a man, and as a Party they represent not youth but, at best, vigorous middle-age.

Among the Conservatives, as I have suggested, the young men are at last going to have their chance. Mr. Baldwin always wilts in Opposition, and the lead in criticism will be taken by Mr. Winston Churchill. His opponents may fling at him Dryden's sneer at Shaftesbury :

" In friendship false, implacable in hate,  
Resolved to ruin or to rule the State "—

yet he remains a first-rate fighting man. In more than a quarter of a century of the chances of politics he has had very little experience of being in Opposition. He is going to have it now, and is determined to enjoy himself. He is the most formidable figure in public life.

•But even Mr. Winston Churchill will need allies, and he is more likely to find them among the Boothbys and Stanleys than among the tired veterans of the last Cabinet. Wisely or unwisely, he is out for

battle and for another election in the near future, and his colleagues will lack the power, if not the will, to hold him back. Unless, therefore, the auspices lie, the Parliament which began with compliments will end with flying crockery; and when the crockery begins to fly, the young men will come into their own.

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